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THE WOMAN'S STORY.

BY

TWENTY AMERICAN WOMEN.

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THE

WOMAN'S STORY

AS TOLD BY

TWENTY AMERICAN WOMEN

WITH

PORTRAITS, AND SKETCHES OF THE AUTHORS

BY

LAURA C. HOLLOWAY

Author of "The Ladies of the White House," "An Hour with Charlotte Bronte," "Adelaide Neilson," "The Hearthstone," "Mothers of Great Men and Women," "Howard, the Christian Hero," "The Home in Poetry," etc.

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PREFACE.

THE woman's story as told by twenty American women is a composite picture of the representative fiction work of the female writers of the republic. It is one which depicts the types and characteristics of people who unitedly compose our young nation. The composite woman's picture is full of patriotic fire; of the fervor and faith of free institutions, and is distinguished by a zealous allegiance to the domestic qualities of the people, which have found widest expression under our form of government. The differences in population; the varieties of classes, and the broad distinctions in local coloring are vividly exhibited in the annals of American fiction, the largest contributors to which are women. The compilation represents the field of fiction, from the appearance of the first great American novel to the present day. Mrs. Stowe's sketch of New England life, which opens the volume, was the forerunner of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and is as graphic a pen-picture of the phase of life it represents as was her famous novel of slavery. Miss Alcott's "Transcendental Wild Oats" is the truest delineation of the salient features of the Transcendental movement yet made, and is as striking in its faithfulness as is Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Lot."

Both these sketches were selected by their authors for this volume, as were each and every one in it, and in every case the writers pronounced them to be their best sketch work. They are as a whole a representative collection, and portray the ideality, graceful diction, and marked individuality of our national literature. For their use in this form, I am gratefully indebted to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, Harper Bros., Roberts Bros., Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Charles Dillingham, The American Publishing Company, and The Century Company.

UNCLE LOT.

BY

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, the daughter of the Rev. Lyman Beecher, was born at Litchfield, Conn., in 1812, and was one of the most gifted of the brilliant children of that remarkable New England divine. She was a precocious child, and was at the age of five a fluent reader. Her mother died when she was four years of age, and her brother Henry was the baby of the household. When she was seven she was sent as a pupil to the seminary at Litchfield, then under the management of one of the leading educators of his time, Mr. Brace. At twelve years she was writing compositions on such topics as, "Can the immortality of the soul be proved by light of nature?" This was the theme of her essay for the annual exhibition and she says of it: "I remember the scene to me so eventful. The hall was crowded with all the literati of Litchfield. Before them all our compositions were read aloud. When mine was read, I noticed that father, who was sttting on the right of Mr. Brace, brightened, and looked interested, and at the close I heard him say, "Who wrote that composition?" "Your daughter, sir," was the answer. It was the proudest moment of my life. There was no mistaking father's face when he was pleased, and to have interested *him* was past all juvenile triumphs."

In 1836 she became the wife of the Rev. Dr. E. C. Stowe, and for a number of years resided in Cincinnati, where he was a professor in the Lane Theological Seminary. She wrote sketches for periodicals and Sunday-school books, thus trying to add to her slender resources, for, with a growing family her husband's limited income did not suffice to allow of any luxuries.

I asked her recently to tell me which of the short stories she had written she considered her best, and she answered: "The New England story, 'Uncle Lot,'

was the first story I ever wrote, and I still think it the best of the collected stories published in the 'Mayflower.' It was written primarily for a literary circle called the 'Semicolon,' which had its weekly sessions at the home of my uncle, S. E. Foote; then it was published by Judge Hall in his monthly magazine." Mrs. Stowe is the typical New England representative of fiction among women, and is the foremost American writer of her day, hence her story has the place of honor in this collection. Her "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was the most successful book published in the world in this century. It has been translated into nineteen different languages, and has had an enormous sale throughout the civilized world.

While she was residing in Cincinnati, Mrs. Stowe visited Kentucky and there came in direct contact with the institution she abhorred. The result of her acquaintance was that she was more than ever confirmed in her hostility, and as the subject of slavery was uppermost in the public mind she naturally thought and talked much of it among her New England friends. Her husband was one of the professors of Bowdoin College, and she came in contact with the educators of that and other institutions where the question of abolition was often the topic of conversation.

The anti-slavery paper in Washington at that time was the *National Era*, and the editors of it invited Mrs. Stowe to write them a serial story. She consulted her brother Henry and he advised her to accept the offer made. That was the beginning of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." When it was finished the author was completely used up, and was sick in bed for several days. The chapters were written from week to week and read to the family every night. Mrs. Stowe always speaks of this book as having been revealed to her, and very recently she declared that she did not write it, that God gave it to her.

The authorship of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was for a time attributed to Mr. Beecher. He very wittily said that he could never stop the scandalous story until he wrote his novel, "Norwood"; that ended the matter.

Mrs. Stowe's "Minister's Wooing" is considered the best of her works after "Uncle Tom's Cabin,"

From a literary point of view it is superior to her famous story. Mr. Gladstone wrote her that he "considered it one of the most charming pictures of Puritan life possible." It graphically portrays the Calvinistic side of New England life, and will occupy a permanent place in American fiction.

In 1853 Mrs. Stowe travelled in Europe and wrote an account of her tour in a volume entitled "Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands." Other works of hers are "Dred, a Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp"; "Oldtown Folks"; "My Wife and I"; "The Pearl of Orr's Island"; and "Palmetto Sketches."

For several years Mrs. Stowe's pen has been idle; she is growing old and her work is done. The death of her husband, Professor Stowe, and then of her brother, Henry Ward Beecher, cast shadows over her life, from which she will not emerge. For some years she had a winter residence in Florida, spending her summers at her home in Hartford, but she parted with it and resides permanently in Hartford with her twin daughters, who are unmarried. Mrs. Stowe's eldest son, Rev. Charles Stowe, is a Congregationalist minister in Hartford, and has been selected by his distinguished mother as her biographer.

UNCLE LOT.

AND so I am to write a story, but of what and where? Shall it be radiant with the sky of Italy? or eloquent with the beau ideal of Greece? Shall it breathe odor and languor from the orient, or chivalry from the occident? or gayety from France? or vigor from England? No, no, these are all too old, too romance like, too obviously picturesque for me. No, let me turn to my own land, my own New England; the land of bright fires and strong hearts; the land of *deeds*, and not of words: the land of fruits and not of flowers, the land often spoken against, yet always respected, "the latchet of whose shoes the nations of the earth are not worthy to unloose." Now from this very heroic apostrophe, you may suppose that I have something very heroic to tell. By no means. It is merely a little introductory breeze of patriotism, such as occasionally brushes over every mind, bearing on its wings the remembrance of all we ever loved or cherished in the land of our early years, and if it should seem to be rodomontade to any people in other parts of the earth, let them only imagine it to be said about "Old Kentuck," Old England, or any other corner of the world in which they happened to be born, and they will find it quite rational.

But, as touching our story, it is time to begin. Did you ever see the little village of Newbury, in New England? I dare say you never did, for it was just one of those out-of-the-way places where nobody ever came unless they came on purpose: a green little hollow, wedged like a bird's nest between half a dozen high hills, that kept off the wind and kept out foreigners, so that the little place was as strictly *sui generis* as if there were not another in the world. The inhabitants were all of that respectable old standfast family who make it a point to be born, bred, married,

die, and be buried all in the self same spot. There were just so many houses, and just so many people lived in them; and nobody ever seemed to be sick or to die either, at least, while I was there. The natives grew old till they could not grow any older, and then they stood still, and *lasted* from generation to generation.

There was, too, an unchangeability about all the externals of Newbury. Here was a red house, and there was a brown house, and across the way was a yellow house; and there was a straggling rail fence or a tribe of mullein stalks between. The minister lived there, and 'Squire Moses lived there, and Deacon Hart lived under the hill, and Messrs. Nadab and Abihu Peters lived by the cross road, and the old "Widder" Smith lived by the meeting house, and Ebenezer Camp kept a shoemaker's shop on one side, and Patience Mosely kept a milliner's shop in front; and there was old Comfort Scran who kept store for the whole town, and sold axe heads, brass thimbles, licorice ball, fancy handkerchiefs, and everything else you can think of. Here, too, was the general post-office, where you might see letters marvellously folded, directed wrong side upward, stamped with a thimble, and superscribed to some of the Dollys or Pollys or Peters or Moseses aforenamed or not named. For the rest, as to manners, morals, arts and sciences, the people in Newbury always went to their parties at three o'clock in the afternoon, and came home before dark, always stopped all work the minute the sun was down on Saturday night; always went to meeting on Sunday; had a school-house with all the ordinary inconveniences; were in neighborly charity with each other; read their Bibles, feared their God, and were content with such things as they had,—the best philosophy after all. Such was the place into which Master James Benton made an irruption in the year eighteen hundred and no matter what. Now this James is to be our hero, and he is just the hero for a sensation, at least, so you would have thought if you had been in Newbury the week after his arrival. Master James was one of those whole-hearted energetic Yankees, who rise in the world as naturally as cork does in water. He possessed a great share of that characteristic

national trait so happily denominated "cuteness," which signifies an ability to do everything without trying, and to know everything without learning, and to make more use of one's *ignorance* than other people do of their knowledge. This quality in James was mingled with an elasticity of animal spirits, a buoyant cheerfulness of mind, which, though found in the New England character, perhaps as often as anywhere else, is not ordinarily regarded as one of its distinguishing traits.

As to the personal appearance of our hero, we have not much to say of it—not half so much as the girls in Newbury found it necessary to remark, the first Sabbath that he shone out in the meeting house. There was a saucy frankness of countenance, a knowing roguery of eye, a jovialty and prankishness of demeanor that was wonderfully captivating, especially to the ladies.

It is true that Master James had an uncommonly comfortable opinion of himself, a full faith that there was nothing in creation that he could not learn and could not do, and this faith was maintained with an abounding and triumphant joyfulness that fairly carried your sympathies along with him, and made you feel quite as much delighted with his qualifications and prospects as he felt himself. There are two kinds of self-sufficiency: one is amusing and the other is provoking. He was the amusing kind. It seemed, in truth, to be only the buoyancy and overflow of a vivacious mind, delighted with everything delightful, in himself or others. He was always ready to magnify his own praise, but quite as ready to exalt his neighbor if the channel of discourse ran that way; his own perfections being more completely within his knowledge, he rejoiced in them more constantly; but if those of any one else came within the same range, he was quite as much astonished and edified as if they had been his own. Master James, at the time of his transit to the town of Newbury, was only eighteen years of age, so that it was difficult to say which predominated in him most, the boy or the man. The belief that he could, and the determination that he would be something in the world had caused him to abandon his home, and with all his worldly

effects tied in a blue cotton handkerchief to proceed to seek his fortune in Newbury. And never did stranger in Yankee village rise to promotion with more unparalleled rapidity, or boast a greater plurality of employment. He figured as schoolmaster all the week, and as chorister on Sundays, and taught singing and reading in the evenings, besides studying Latin and Greek with the minister, nobody knew when, thus fitting for college, while he seemed to be doing everything else in the world besides.

James understood every art and craft of popularity, and made himself mightily at home in all the chimney corners of the region round about; knew the geography of everybody's cider barrel and apple bin, helping himself and every one else therefrom, with all bountifulness; rejoicing in the good things of this life, devouring the old ladies' doughnuts and pumpkin pies with most flattering appetite, and appearing equally to relish everybody and thing that came in his way.

The degree and versatility of his acquirements were truly wonderful. He knew all about arithmetic and history, and all about catching squirrels and planting corn; made poetry and hoe handles with equal celerity; wound yarn and took out grease spots for old ladies, and made nosegays and knick-knacks for young ones; caught trout Saturday afternoons, and discussed doctrines on Sundays, with equal adroitness and effect. In short, Mr. James moved on through the place

"Victorious,
Happy and glorious,"

welcomed and privileged by everybody in every place. And when he had told his last ghost story, and fairly flourished himself out of doors at the close of a long winter's evening, you might see the hard face of the good man of the house still phosphorescent with his departing radiance, and hear him exclaim, in a paroxysm of admiration, that "Jemese's talk re'ely did beat all; that he was sartainly most a miraculus cretur!"

It was wonderfully contrary to the buoyant activity of Master James' mind to keep a school. He had, moreover, so much of the boy and the rogue in his

composition, that he could not be strict with the iniquities of the curly pates under his charge; and when he saw how determinately every little heart was boiling over with mischief and motion, he felt in his soul more disposed to join in and help them to a frolic than to lay justice to the line, as was meet. This would have made a sad case, had it not been that the activity of the master's mind communicated itself to his charge, just as the reaction of one brisk little spring will fill a manufactory with motion; so that there was more of an impulse towards study in the golden, good-natured day of James Benton than in the time of all that went before or came after him. But when "school was out," James' spirits foamed over as naturally as a tumbler of soda water, and he could jump over benches and burst out of doors with as much rapture as the veriest little elf in his company. Then you might have seen him stepping homeward with a most felicitous expression of countenance, occasionally reaching his hand through the fence for a bunch of currants, or over it after a flower, or bursting into some back yard to help an old lady empty her wash-tub, or stopping to pay his *devoirs* to Aunt This or Mistress That, for James well knew the importance of the "powers that be," and always kept the sunny side of the old ladies.

We shall not answer for James' general flirtations, which were sundry and manifold; for he had just the kindly heart that fell in love with everything in feminine shape that came in his way, and if he had not been blessed with an equal facility in falling out again, we do not know whatever would have become of him. But at length he came into an abiding captivity and it is quite time that he should, for, having devoted this much space to the illustration of our hero, it is fit we should do something in behalf of our heroine; and, therefore, we must beg the reader's attention while we draw a diagram or two that will assist him in gaining a right idea of her.

Do you see yonder brown house, with its broad roof slooping almost to the ground on one side, and a great, unsupported, sun bonnet of a piazza shooting out over the front door? You must often have noticed it; you have seen its tall well sweep, relieved against the clear evening sky, or observed the feather beds and bolsters

lounging out of its chamber windows on a still summer morning; you recollect its gate, that swung with a chain and a great stone; its pantry window, latticed with little brown slabs, and looking out upon a forest of bean poles. You remember the zephyrs that used to play among its pea brush, and shake the long tassels of its corn-patch, and how vainly any zephyr might essay to perform similar flirtations with the considerate cabbages that were solemnly vegetating near by. Then there was the whole neighborhood of purple-leaved beets, and feathery parsnips; there were the billows of gooseberry bushes rolled up by the fence, interspersed with rows of quince trees, and far off in one corner was one little patch, penuriously devoted to ornament, which flamed with marigolds, poppies, snappers, and four-o'clocks. Then there was a little box by itself with one rose geranium in it, which seemed to look around the garden as much like a stranger as a French dancing master in a Yankee meeting house.

That is the dwelling of Uncle Lot Griswold. Uncle Lot, as he was commonly called, had a character that a painter would sketch for its lights and contrasts rather than its symmetry. He was a chestnut burr, abounding with briers without and with substantial goodness within. He had the strong-grained practical sense, the calculating worldly wisdom of his class of people in New England; he had, too, a kindly heart, but all the strata of his character were crossed by a vein of surly petulance, that, half way between joke and earnest, colored everything that he said and did.

If you asked a favor of Uncle Lot, he generally kept you arguing half an hour, to prove that you really needed it, and to tell you that he could not all the while be troubled with helping one body or another, all which time you might observe him regularly making his preparations to grant your request, and see, by an odd glimmer of his eye, that he was preparing to let you hear the "conclusion of the whole matter," which was, "well, well—I guess—I'll go on the *hull*—I 'spose I must at least;" so off he would go and work while the day lasted, and then wind up with a farewell exhortation "not to be a callin' on your neighbors when you could get along without." If any of Uncle

Lot's neighbors were in any trouble, he was always at hand to tell them that "they shouldn't a' done so;" that "it was strange they couldn't had more sense;" and then to close his exhortations by laboring more diligently than any to bring them out of their difficulties, groaning in spirit, meanwhile, that folks would make people so much trouble.

"Uncle Lot, father wants to know if you will lend him your hoe to-day," says a little boy, making his way across a cornfield.

"Why don't your father use his own hoe?"

"Ours is broke."

"Broke! How came it broke?"

"I broke it yesterday, trying to hit a squirrel."

"What business had you to be hittin' squirrels with a hoe? Say!"

"But father wants to borrow yours."

"Why don't you have that mended? It's a great pest to have everybody usin' a body's things."

"Well, I can borrow one some where else, I suppose," says the suppliant. After the boy has stumbled across the ploughed ground and is fairly over the fence, Uncle Lot calls,—"Halloo, there, you little rascal! What are you goin' off without the hoe for?"

"I didn't know as you meant to lend it."

"I didn't say I wouldn't, did I? Here, come and take it—stay, I'll bring it; and do tell your father not to be a lettin' you hunt squirrels with his hoes next time."

Uncle Lot's household consisted of Aunt Sally, his wife and an only son and daughter; the former at the time our story begins, was at a neighboring literary institution. Aunt Sally was precisely as clever, as easy to be entreated, and kindly in externals, as her helpmate was the reverse. She was one of those respectable, pleasant old ladies whom you might often have met on the way to church on a Sunday, equipped with a great fan and a psalm book, and carrying some dried orange peel or a stalk of fennel, to give to the children if they were sleepy in meeting. She was as cheerful and domestic as the tea kettle that sung by her kitchen fire, and slipped along among Uncle Lot's angles and peculiarities as if there never was anything the matter in the world; and the same mantle of sun-

shine seemed to have fallen on Miss Grace, her only daughter.

Pretty in person and pleasant in her ways, endowed with native self-possession and address, lively and chatty, having a mind and a will of her own, yet good-humored withal, Miss Grace was a universal favorite. It would have puzzled a city lady to understand how Grace, who never was out of Newbury in her life, knew the way to speak, and act, and behave, on all occasions, exactly as if she had been taught how.

She was just one of those wild flowers which you may sometimes see waving its little head in the woods, and looking so civilized and arden-like, that you wonder it it really did come up and grow there by nature. She was an adept in all household concerns, and there was something amazingly pretty in her energetic way of bustling about, and "putting things to rights." Like most Yankee damsels, she had a longing after the tree of knowledge, and, having exhausted the literary fountains of a district school, she fell to reading whatsoever came in her way. True, she had but little to read; but what she perused she had her own thoughts upon, so that a person of information, in talking with her, would feel a constant wondering pleasure to find that she had so much to say of this, that, and the other thing than he expected.

Uncle Lot, like every one else, felt the magical brightness of his daughter, and was delighted with her praises, as might be discerned by his often finding occasion to remark that "he didn't see why the boys need to be all the time a' comin' to see Grace, for she was nothing so extr'or'nary after all."

About all matters and things at home she generally had her own way, while Uncle Lot would scold and give up with a regular good grace that was quite creditable.

"Father," says Grace, "I want to have a party next week."

"You sha'n't go to havin' your parties, Grace. I always have to eat bits and ends a fortnight after you have one, and I won't have it so." And so Uncle Lot walked out, and Aunt Sally and Miss Grace proceeded to make the cake and pies for the party.

When Uncle Lot came home, he saw a long array of pies and rows of cakes on the kitchen table.

"Grace—Grace—Grace, I say! What is all this here flummery for?"

"Why, it is *to eat*, father," said Grace, with a good-natured look of consciousness. Uncle Lot tried his best to look sour; but his visage began to wax comical as he looked at his merry daughter; so he said nothing, but quietly sat down to his dinner.

"Father," said Grace, after dinner, "we shall want two more candlesticks next week."

"Why can't you have your party with what you've got?"

"No, father, we want two more."

"I can't afford it, Grace—there's no sort of use on't—and you sha'n't have any."

"Oh, father, now do," said Grace.

"I won't, neither," said Uncle Lot, as he sallied out of the house, and took the road to Comfort Scran's store.

In half an hour he returned again; and fumbling in his pocket, and drawing forth a candlestick, levelled it at Grace.

"There's your candlestick."

"But, father, I said I wanted *two*."

"Why can't you make one do?"

"No, I can't; I must have two."

"Well, then, there's t'other; and here's a fol-de-rol for you to tie around your neck." So saying, he bolted for the door, and took himself off with all speed. It was much after this fashion that matters commonly went on in the brown house. But having tarried long on the way, we must proceed with the main story.

James thought Miss Grace was a glorious girl; and as to what Miss Grace thought of Master James, perhaps it would not have been developed had she not been called to stand on the defensive for him with Uncle Lot. For, from the time that the whole village of Newbury began to be wholly given unto the praise of Master James, Uncle Lot set his face as a flint against him—from the laudable fear of following the multitude. He therefore made conscience of stoutly gainsaying everything that was said in his behalf,

which, as James was in high favor with Aunt Sally, he had frequent opportunities to do.

So when Miss Grace perceived that Uncle Lot did not like our hero as much as he ought to do, she, of course, was bound to like him well enough to make up for it. Certain it is that they were remarkably happy in finding opportunities of being acquainted, that James waited on her, as a matter of course, from singing school, that he volunteered making a new box for her geranium on an improved plan, and above all, that he was remarkably particular in his attentions to Aunt Sally—a stroke of policy which showed James had a natural genius for this sort of matters. Even when emerging from the meeting house in full glory, with flute and psalm book under his arm, he would stop to ask her how she did; and if it was cold weather, he would carry her foot stove all the way home from meeting, discoursing upon the sermon, and other serious matters, as Aunt Sally observed "in the pleasantest, prettiest way that ever ye see." This flute was one of the crying sins of James in the eyes of Uncle Lot. James was particularly fond of it, because he had learned to play on it by intuition, and on the decease of the old pitchpipe, which was slain by a fall from the gallery, he took the liberty to introduce the flute in its place. For this, and other sins, and for the good reason above named, Uncle Lot's countenance was not towards James, neither could he be moved to him-ward by any manner of means.

To all Aunt Sally's good words and kind speeches, he had only to say that "he didn't like him, that he hated to see him a' manifesting and glorifying there in the front gallery Sundays, and a' acting everywhere as if he was master of all; he didn't like it, and he wouldn't." But our hero was no whit cast down or discomfited by the malcontent aspect of Uncle Lot. On the contrary, when report was made to him of divers of his hard speeches, he only shrugged his shoulders with a very satisfied air, and remarked that "he knew a thing or two for all that."

"Why, James," said his companion and chief counsellor, "do you think Grace likes you?"

"I don't know," said our hero, with a comfortable appearance of certainty.

"But you can't get her, James, if Uncle Lot is cross about it."

"Fudge! I can make Uncle Lot like me if I have a mind to try."

"Well then, Jim, you'll have to give up that flute of yours, I tell you now."

"Fa sol la—I can make him like me and my flute too."

"Why, how will you do it?"

"Oh, I'll work it," said our hero.

"Well, Jim, I tell you now, you don't know Uncle Lot if you say so; for he is just the *settest* critter in his own way that ever you saw."

"I *do* know Uncle Lot though, better than most folks; he is no more cross than I am; and as to his being *set*, you have nothing to do but to make him think he is in his own way, when he is in yours—that is all."

"Well," said the other, "but you see I don't believe it."

"And I'll bet you a gray squirrel that I'll go there this very evening, and get him to like me and my flute both," said James.

Accordingly the late sunshine of that afternoon shone full on the yellow buttons of James as he proceeded to the place of conflict. It was a bright, beautiful evening. A thunder storm had just cleared away, and the silver clouds lay rolled up in masses around the setting sun; the rain drops were sparkling and winking to each other over the ends of the leaves, and all the blue-birds and robins, breaking forth into song, made the little green valley as merry as a musical box.

James' soul was always overflowing with the kind of poetry which consists in feeling unspeakably happy; and it is not to be wondered at, considering where he was going, that he should feel in a double ecstasy on the present occasion. He stepped gayly along, occasionally springing over a fence to the right to see whether the rain had swollen the trout brook, or to the left to notice the ripening of Mr. Somebody's watermelons—for James always had an eye on all his neighbors' matters as well as his own.

In this way he proceeded till he arrived at the picket

fence that marked the commencement of Uncle Lot's ground. Here he stopped to consider. Just then four or five sheep walked up, and began also to consider a loose picket, which was hanging just ready to drop off; and James began to look at the sheep.

"Well, mister," said he, as he observed the leader judiciously drawing himself through the gap, "in with you—just what I wanted," and having waited a moment to ascertain that all the company were likely to follow, he ran with all haste towards the house, and swinging open the gate, pressed all breathless to the door.

"Uncle Lot, there are four or five sheep in your garden!"

Uncle Lot dropped his whetstone and scythe.

"I'll drive them out," said our hero; and with that, he ran down the garden alley, and made a furious descent on the enemy; bestirring himself, as Bunyan says, "lustily and with good courage," till every sheep had skipped out much quicker than it skipped in; and then, springing over the fence, he seized a great stone, and nailed on the picket so effectually that no sheep could possibly encourage the hope of getting in again. This was all the work of a minute, and he was back again; but so exceedingly out of breath that it was necessary for him to stop a moment and rest himself. Uncle Lot looked ungraciously satisfied.

"What under the canopy set you to scampering so?" said he. "I could a' driv out them critturs myself."

"If you are at all particular about driving them out *yourself*, I can let them in again," said James.

Uncle Lot looked at him with an odd sort of twinkle in the corner of his eye.

"'Spose I must ask you to walk in," said he.

"Much obliged," said James, "but I am in a great hurry." So saying, he started in a very business-like fashion towards the gate.

"You'd better jest stop a minute."

"Can't stay a minute."

"I don't see what possesses you to be all the while in sich a hurry; a body would think you had all creation on your shoulders."

"Just my situation, Uncle Lot," said James, swinging open the gate.

"Well, at any rate, have a drink of cider, can't ye?" said Uncle Lot, who was now quite engaged to have his own way in the case.

James found it convenient to accept this invitation, and Uncle Lot was twice as good natured as if he had staid in the first of the matter.

Once fairly forced into the premises, James thought fit to forget his long walk and excess of business, especially as about that moment Aunt Sally and Miss Grace returned from an afternoon call. You may be sure that the last thing these respectable ladies looked for was to find Uncle Lot and Master James *tête-à-tête*, over a pitcher of cider; and when, as they entered, our hero looked up with something of a mischievous air, Miss Grace, in particular, was so puzzled that it took at least a quarter of an hour to untie her bonnet strings. But James staid, and acted the agreeable to perfection. First he must needs go down into the garden to look at Uncle Lot's wonderful cabbages, and then he promenaded all around the corn patch, stopping every few moments and looking up with an appearance of great gratification, as if he had never seen such corn in his life; and then he examined Uncle Lot's favorite apple tree with an expression of wonderful interest.

"I never!" he broke forth, having stationed himself against the fence opposite to it; "what kind of an apple tree is that?"

"It's a bellflower, or somethin' another," said Uncle Lot.

"Why, where *did* you get it? I never saw such apples!" said our hero, with his eyes still fixed on the tree.

Uncle Lot pulled up a stalk or two of weeds, and threw them over the fence, just to show that he did not care anything about the matter; and then he came up and stood by James.

"Nothin' so remarkable, as I know on," said he.

Just then Grace came to say that supper was ready. Once seated at table, it was astonishing to see the perfect and smiling assurance with which our hero continued his addresses to Uncle Lot. It sometimes goes a great way towards making people like us to take it

for granted that they do already; and upon this principle James proceeded. He talked, laughed, told stories, and joked with the most fearless assurance, occasionally seconding his words by looking Uncle Lot in the face, with a countenance so full of good will as would have melted any snow-drift of prejudices in the world. James had also one natural accomplishment, more courtier-like than all the diplomacy in Europe, and that was the gift of feeling a *real* interest for anybody in five minutes; so that if he began to please in jest, he generally ended in earnest. With great simplicity of mind, he had a natural tact for seeing into others and watched their motions with the same delight with which a child gazes at the wheels and springs of a watch, to "see what it will do."

The rough exterior and latent kindness of Uncle Lot were quite a spirit-stirring study; and when tea was over, as he and Grace happened to be standing together in the front door, he broke forth,—

"I do really like your father, Grace!"

"Do you?" said Grace.

"Yes, I do. He has something *in him* and I like him all the better for having to fish it out."

"Well, I hope you will make him like you," said Grace, unconsciously; and then she stopped, and looked a little ashamed.

James was too well bred to see this, or look as if Grace meant any more than she said—a kind of breeding not always attendant on more fashionable polish—so he only answered,—

"I think I shall, Grace, though I doubt whether I can get him to own it."

"He is the kindest man that ever was," said Grace; "and he always acts as if he was ashamed of it."

James turned a little away, and looked at the bright evening sky, which was glowing like a calm golden sea; and over it was the silver new moon, with one little star to hold the candle for her. He shook some bright drops off from a rosebush near by, and watched to see them shine as they fell, while Grace stood very quietly waiting for him to speak again.

"Grace," said he, at last, "I am going to college this fall."

"So you told me yesterday," said Grace. James

stooped down over Grace's geranium, and began to busy himself with pulling off all the dead leaves, remarking in the meanwhile.

"And if I do get *him* to like me, Grace, will you like me too?"

"I like you now very well," said Grace.

"Come, Grace, you know what I mean," said James, looking steadfastly at the top of the apple tree.

"Well, I wish then, you would understand what I mean, without my saying any more about it," said Grace.

"O, to be sure I will!" said our hero, looking up with a very intelligent air, and so as Aunt Sally would say, the matter was settled with "no words about it."

Now shall we narrate how our hero, as he saw Uncle Lot approaching the door, had the impudence to take out his flute, and put the parts together, arranging and adjusting the stops with great composure?

"Uncle Lot," said he, looking up, "this is the best flute that ever I saw."

"I hate them tooting critturs," said Uncle Lot snappishly.

"I declare, I wonder how you can," said James, "for I do think they exceed—" So saying he put the flute to his mouth, and ran up and down a long flourish. "There! what do you think of that?" said he, looking in Uncle Lot's face with much delight.

Uncle Lot turned and marched into the house, but soon paced to the right-about, and came out again, for James was fingering "Yankee Doodle,"—that appropriate national air for the descendants of the Puritans. Uncle Lot's patriotism began to bestir itself; and now, if it had been anything, as he said, but "that ere flute" —as it was, he looked more than once at James' fingers.

"How under the sun *could* you learn to do that?" said he.

"Oh, its easy enough," said James, proceeding with another tune; and, having played it through, he stopped a moment to examine the joints of his flute, and in the mean time addressed Uncle Lot. "You can't think how grand this is for pitching tunes. I always pitch the tunes on Sunday with it."

"Yes; but I don't think it's a right and fit instrument for the Lord's house," said Uncle Lot.

"Why not? It is only a kind of a long pitchpipe, you see," said James; "and, seeing the old one is broken, and this will answer, I don't see why it is not better than nothing,"

"Why, yes, it may be better than nothing," said Uncle Lot; "but as I always tell Grace and my wife, it ain't the right kind of instrument after all; it ain't solemn."

"Solemn!" said James, "that is according as you work it. See here, now." So saying, he struck up Old Hundred, and proceeded through it with great perseverance.

"There, now!" said he.

"Well, well, I don't know but it is," said Uncle Lot; "but, as I said at first, I don't like the looks of it in meetin'."

"But yet you really think it is better than nothing," said James, "for you see I can't pitch my tunes without it."

"Maybe 'tis," said Uncle Lot; "but that isn't sayin' much."

This, however, was enough for Master James, who soon after departed with his flute in his pocket, and Grace's last words in his heart, soliloquizing as he shut the gate, "There, now, I hope Aunt Sally wont go to praising me; for, just so sure as she does, I shall have it all to do over again."

James was right in his apprehension. Uncle Lot could be privately converted, but not brought to open confession; and when, the next morning, Aunt Sally remarked, in the kindness of her heart,—

"Well, I always knew you would come to like James," Uncle Lot only responded.

"Who said I did like him?"

"But I am sure you seemed to like him last night."

"Why, I couldn't turn him out o' doors, could I? I don't think nothin' of him but what I always did." But it was to be remarked that Uncle Lot contented himself at this time with the mere general avowal, without running it into particulars, as was formerly his wont. It was evident that the ice had begun to melt, but it might have been a long time in dissolving, had not collateral incidents assisted.

It so happened that about this time George Gris-

wold, the only son before referred to, returned to his native village, after having completed his theological studies at a neighboring institution. It is interesting to mark the gradual development of mind and heart, from the time that the white-headed, bashful boy quits the country village for college, to the period when he returns, a formed and matured man, to notice how gradually the rust of early prejudices begins to cleave from him—how his opinions, like his handwriting, pass from the cramped and limited forms of a country school into that confirmed and characteristic style which is to mark the man for life. In George this change was remarkably striking. He was endowed by nature with uncommon acuteness of feeling and fondness for reflection—qualities as likely as any to render a child backward and uninteresting in early life.

When he left Newbury for college, he was a taciturn and apparently phlegmatic boy, only evincing sensibility by blushing and looking particularly stupified whenever anybody spoke to him. Vacation after vacation passed, and he returned more and more an altered being; and he who once shrunk from the eye of the deacon, and was ready to sink if he met the minister, now moved about among the dignitaries of the place with all the composure of a superior being. It is only to be regretted that, while the mind improved, the physical energies declined, and that every visit to his home found him paler, thinner, and less prepared in body for the sacred profession to which he had devoted himself. But now he was returned a minister—a real minister, with a right to stand in the pulpit and preach; and what a joy and glory to Aunt Sally and to Uncle Lot, if he were not ashamed to own it!

The first Sunday after he came, it was known far and near that George Griswold was to preach; and never was a more ready and expectant audience.

As the time for reading the first psalm approached, you might see the white-headed men turning their faces attentively towards the pulpet; the anxious and expectant old women, with their little black bonnets bent forward to see him rise. There were the children looking because every body else looked; there was Uncle Lot in the front pew, his face considerably

adjusted; there was Aunt Sally, seeming as pleased as a mother could seem; and Miss Grace lifting her sweet face to her brother, like a flower to the sun; there was our friend James in the front gallery, his joyous countenance a little touched with sobriety and expectation; in short, a more embarrassingly attentive audience never greeted the first efforts of a young minister. Under these circumstances there was something touching in the fervent self-forgetfulness which characterized the first exercises of the morning, something which moved every one in the house.

The devout poetry of his prayer, rich with the Orientalism of Scripture, and eloquent with the expression of strong yet chastened emotion, breathed over his audience like music hushing every one to silence, and beguiling every one to feeling. In the sermon, there was the strong intellectual nerve, the constant occurrence of argument and statement, which distinguishes a New England discourse; but it was touched with life by the intense, yet half subdued feeling with which he seemed to utter it. Like the rays of the sun, it enlightened and melted at the same moment.

The strong peculiarities of New England doctrine, involving as they do, all the hidden machinery of mind, all the mystery of its divine relations and future progression, and all the tremendous uncertainties of its eternal good or ill, seemed to have dwelt in his mind, to have burned in his thoughts, to have wrestled with his powers, and they gave to his manner the fervency almost of another world; while the exceeding paleness of his countenance, and a tremulousness of voice that seemed to spring from bodily weakness, touched the strong workings of his mind with a pathetic interest, as if the being so early absorbed in another world could not be long for this.

When the services were over the congregation dispersed with the air of people who had *felt* rather than *heard*, and all the criticism that followed was similar to that of old Deacon Hart—an upright, shrewd man—who, as he lingered a moment at the church door, turned and gazed with unwonted feeling at the young preacher.

"He's a blessed cretur!" said he, the tears actually *making* their way to his eyes; "I haint been so near

heaven this many a day. He's a blessed cretur of the Lord; that's my mind about him!"

As for our friend James, he was at first sobered, then deeply moved, and at last wholly absorbed by the discourse, and it was only when meeting was over that he began to think where he really was.

With all his versatile activity, James had a greater depth of mental capacity than he was himself aware of, and he began to feel a sort of electric affinity for the mind that had touched him in a way so new; and when he saw the mild minister standing at the foot of the pulpit stairs, he made directly towards him.

"I do want to hear more from you," said he, with a face full of earnestness; "may I walk home with you?"

"It is a long and warm walk," said George, smiling.

"Oh, I don't care for that, if it does not trouble *you*," said James; and leave being gained, you might have seen them slowly passing along under the trees, James pouring forth all the floods of inquiry which the sudden impulse of his mind had brought out, and supplying his guide with more questions and problems for solution than he could have gone through with in a month.

"I cannot answer all your questions now," said he, as they stopped at Uncle Lot's gate.

"Well, then, when will you?" said James eagerly. "Let me come home with you to-night?"

The minister smiled assent, and James departed so full of new thoughts, that he passed Grace without even seeing her. From that time a friendship commenced between the two, which was a beautiful illustration of the affinities of opposites. It was like a friendship between morning and evening, all freshness and sunshine on one side, and all gentleness and peace on the other.

The young minister, worn by long-continued ill health, by the fervency of his own feelings, and the gravity of his own reasonings, found pleasure in the healthful buoyancy of a youthful, unexhausted mind, while James felt himself sobered and made better by the moonlight tranquillity of his friend. It is one mark of a superior mind to understand and be influenced by the superiority of others, and this was the case with James. The ascendancy which his new friend acquired over him was unlimited, and did more in a month

towards consolidating and developing his character than all the four years course of a college. Our religious habits are likely always to retain the impression of the first seal which stamped them, and in this case it was a peculiarly happy one. The calmness, the settled purpose, the mild devotion of his friend, formed a just alloy to the energetic and reckless buoyancy of James' character, and awakened in him a set of feelings without which the most vigorous mind must be incomplete.

The effect of the ministrations of the young pastor, in awakening attention to the subjects of his calling in the village was marked, and of a kind which brought pleasure to his own heart. But, like all other excitement, it tends to exhaustion, and it was not long before he sensibly felt the decline of the powers of life.

To the best regulated mind there is something bitter in the relinquishment of projects for which we have been long and laboriously preparing, and there is something far more bitter in crossing the long-cherished expectations of friends. All this George felt. He could not bear to look on his mother, hanging on his words and following his steps with eyes of almost childish delight—on his singular father, whose whole earthly ambition was bound up in his success, and think how soon the "candle of their old age" must be put out.

When he returned from a successful effort, it was painful to see the old man, so evidently delighted, and so anxious to conceal his triumph, as he would seat himself in his chair, and begin with "George, that 'are doctrine is rather of a puzzler; but you seem to think you've got the run on't. I should re'ly like to know what business you have to think you know better than other folks about it," and, though he would cavil most courageously at all George's explanations, yet you might perceive, through all, that he was inly uplifted to hear how his boy could talk.

If George was engaged in argument with any one else, he would sit by with his head bowed down, looking out from under his shaggy eyebrows with a shamefaced satisfaction very unusual with him. Expressions of affection from the naturally gentle are not half so touching as those which are forced out from the hard-favored, and severe; and George was affected, even

to pain, by the evident pride and regard of his father.

"He never said so much to anybody before," thought he, "and what will he do if I die?"

In such thoughts as these Grace found her brother engaged one still autumn morning, as he stood leaning against the garden fence.

"What are you solemnizing here for, this bright day, brother George?" said she, as she bounded down the alley.

The young man turned and looked on her happy face with a sort of twilight smile.

"How *happy* you are, Grace!" said he.

"To be sure I am; and you ought to be, too, because you are better."

"I am happy, Grace—that is, I hope I shall be."

"You are sick, I know you are," said Grace; "you look worn out. Oh, I wish your heart would *spring* once as mine does."

"I am not well, dear Grace, and I fear I never shall be," said he, turning away and fixing his eyes on the fading trees opposite.

"Oh, George! dear George, don't, don't say *that*, you'll break all our hearts," said Grace, with tears in her own eyes.

"Yes, but it is *true*, sister: I do not feel it on my own account so much as— However," he added, "it will all be the same in heaven."

It was but a week after this that a violent cold hastened the progress of debility into a confirmed malady. He sunk very fast. Aunt Sally, with the self-deceit of a fond and cheerful heart, thought every day that "he *would* be better," and Uncle Lot resisted conviction with all the obstinate pertinacity of his character, while the sick man felt that he had not the heart to undeceive them.

James was now at the house every day, exhausting all his energy and invention in the case of his friend; and any one who had seen him in his hours of recklessness and glee could scarcely recognize him, as the being whose step was so careful, whose eye so watchful, whose voice and touch were so gentle, as he moved around the sick bed. But the same quickness which

makes a mind buoyant in gladness, often makes it gentlest and most sympathetic in sorrow.

It was now nearly morning in the sick room. George had been restless and feverish all night; but towards day he fell into a slight slumber, and James sat by his side, almost holding his breath lest he should waken him. It was yet dusk, but the sky was brightening with a solemn glow, and the stars were beginning to disappear, all, save the bright and morning one, which, standing alone in the east, looked tenderly through the casement, like the eye of our heavenly Father, watching over us when all earthly friendships are fading.

George awoke with a placid expression of countenance, and fixing his eyes on the brightening sky, murmured faintly,—

> "The sweet, immortal morning sheds
> Its blushes round the spheres."

A moment after, a shade passed over his face; he pressed his fingers over his eyes, and the tears dropped silently on his pillow.

"George! *dear* George!" said James, bending over him.

"It's my friends—it's my father—my mother," said he faintly.

"Jesus Christ will watch over them," said James, soothingly.

"Oh, yes, I know he will; for *he* loved his own which were in the world; he loved them unto the end. But I am dying—and before I have done any good."

"Oh, do not say so," said James; "think, think what you have done, if only for *me*. God bless you for it! God *will* bless you for it; it will follow you to heaven; it will bring me there. Yes, I will do as you have taught me. I will give my life, my soul, my whole strength to it; and then you will not have lived in vain."

George smiled, and looked upward; "his face was as that of an angel;" and James, in his warmth, continued,—

"It is not I alone who can say this; we all bless you; every one in this place blesses you; you will be

had in everlasting remembrance by some hearts here, I know."

"Bless God!" said George.

"We do," said James. "I bless him that I ever knew you; we all bless him, and we love you, and shall forever."

The glow that had kindled over the pale face of the invalid again faded as he said,—

"But, James, I must, I ought to tell my father and mother; I ought to, and how can I?"

At that moment the door opened, and Uncle Lot made his appearance. He seemed struck with the paleness of George's face; and coming to the side of the bed, he felt his pulse, and laid his hand anxiously on his forehead, and clearing his voice several times, inquired "if he didn't feel a little better."

"No, father, said George; then taking his hand, he looked anxiously in his face, and seemed to hesitate a moment. "Father," he began, "you know that we ought to submit to God."

There was something in his expression at this moment which flashed the truth into the old man's mind. He dropped his son's hand with an exclamation of agony, and turning quickly, left the room.

"Father! father!" said Grace, trying to rouse him, as he stood with his arms folded by the kitchen window.

"Get away, child!" said he, roughly.

"Father, mother says breakfast is ready."

"I don't want any breakfast," said he, turning short about. "Sally, what are you fixing in that 'ere porringer?"

"Oh, it's only a little tea for George; 't will comfort him up, and make him feel better, poor fellow."

"You won't make him feel better—he's gone," said Uncle Lot, hoarsely.

"Oh, dear heart, **no,**" **said Aunt Sally.**

"Be still a' contradicting me; I won't be contradicted all the time by nobody. The short of the case is, that George is goin' to *die* just as we've got him ready to be a minister and all; and I wish to pity I was in my grave myself, and so—" said Uncle Lot, as he plunged out of the door, and shut it after him.

It is well for man that there is one Being who sees

the suffering heart *as it is*, and not as it manifests itself through the repellances of outward infirmity, and who, perhaps, feels more for the stern and wayward than for those whose gentler feelings win for them human sympathy. With all his singularities, there was in the heart of Uncle Lot a depth of religious sincerity; but there are few characters where religion does anything more than struggle with natural defect, and modify what would else be far worse. In this hour of trial, all the native obstinacy and pertinacity of the old man's character rose, and while he felt the necessity of submission, it seemed impossible to submit; and thus, reproaching himself, struggling in vain to repress the murmurs of nature, repulsing from him all external sympathy, his mind was "tempest-tossed, and not comforted."

It was on the still afternoon of the following Sabbath that he was sent for, in haste, to the chamber of his son. He entered, and saw that the hour was come. The family were all there. Grace and James, side by side, bent over the dying one, and his mother sat afar off, with her face hid in her apron, "that she might not see the death of the child." The aged minister was there, and the Bible lay open before him. The father walked to the side of the bed. He stood still, and gazed on the face now brightening with "life and immortality." The son lifted up his eyes; he saw his father, smiled, and put out his hand. "I am glad *you* are come," said he. "O George, to the pity, don't! *don't* smile on me so! I know what is coming; I have tried, and tried, and I *can't*, I *can't* have it so" and his frame shook, and he sobbed audibly. The room was still as death; there was none that seemed able to comfort him. At last the son repeated, in a sweet, but interrupted voice, those words of man's best Friend: "Let not your heart be troubled; in my Father's house are many mansions."

"Yes; but I *can't help* being troubled; I suppose the Lord's will must be done, but it'll *kill* me."

"O Father, don't, don't break my heart," said the son, much agitated. "I shall see you again in heaven, and you shall see me again; and then 'your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

"I never shall get to heaven if I feel as I do now," said the old man. "I *cannot* have it so."

The mild face of the sufferer was downcast. "I wish he saw all that *I* do," said he, in a low voice. Then looking towards the minister, he articulated, "Pray for us."

They knelt in prayer. It was soothing, as *real* prayer always must be; and when they rose, every one seemed more calm. But the sufferer was exhausted; his countenance was changed; he looked on his friends; there was a faint whisper, "Peace I leave with you," and he was in heaven.

We need not dwell on what followed. The seed sown by the righteous often blossoms over their grave; and so it was with this good man. The words of peace which he spoke unto his friends while he was yet with them came into remembrance after he was gone; and though he was laid in the grave with many tears, yet it was with softened and submissive hearts.

"The Lord bless him," said Uncle Lot, as he and James were standing, last of all, over the grave. "I believe my heart is gone to heaven with him; and I think the Lord really *did* know what was best, after all."

Our friend James seemed now to become the support of the family; and the bereaved old man unconsciously began to transfer to him the affections that had been left vacant.—"James," said he to him one day, "I suppose you know that you are about the same to me as a son."

"I hope so," said James, kindly.

"Well, well, you'll go to college next week, and none o' y'r keeping school to get along. I've got enough to bring you safe out—that is, if you'll be *car'ful* and *stiddy*."

James knew the heart too well to refuse a favor in which the poor old man's mind was comforting itself. He had the self-command to abstain from any extraordinary expressions of gratitude, but took it kindly, as a matter of course.

"Dear Grace," said he to her, the last evening before he left home, "I am changed; we both are altered since we first knew each other; and now I am going to be gone a long time, but I am sure—" He stopped to arrange his thoughts. "Yes, you may be sure of

all those things you wish to say, and cannot," said Grace.

"Thank you," said James; then looking thoughtfully, he added, "God help me. I believe I have mind enough to be what I mean to; but whatever I am or have shall be given to God and my fellow men; and then, Grace, your brother in heaven will rejoice over me."

"I believe he does *now*," said Grace. "God bless you, James; I don't know what would have become of us if you had not been here. Yes, you will live to be like him, and to do even more good," she added, her face brightening as she spoke, till James thought she really must be right.

* * * * * * *

It was five years after this that James was spoken of as an eloquent and successful minister in the state of C., and was settled in one of its most thriving villages. Late one Autumn evening, a tall, bony, hard-favored man was observed making his way into the outskirts of the place.

"Halloa, there;" he called to a man over the other side of the fence; "what town is this 'ere?"

"It's Farmington, sir."

"Well, I want to know if you know anything of a boy of mine that lives here?"

"A boy of yours? Who?"

"Why, I've got a boy here, that's livin' *on the town*, and I thought I'd jest look him up."

"I don't know any boy that is living on the town. What's his name?"

"Why," said the old man, pushing his hat off from his forehead, "I believe they call him James Benton."

"James Benton! Why, that is our minister's name."

"O wal, I believe he *is* the minister, come to think on't. He's a boy o' mine, though. Where does he live?"

"In that white house that you see set back from the road there, with all those trees round it."

At this instant a tall, manly-looking person approached from behind. Have we not seen that face before? It is a touch graver than of old, and its lines have a more thoughtful significance; but all the vivac-

ity of James Benton sparkles in that quick smile as his eye falls on the old man.

I *thought* you could not keep away from us long," said he, with the prompt cheerfulness of his boyhood, and laying hold of both of Uncle Lot's hands.

They approached the gate; a bright face glances past the window, and in a moment Grace is at the door.

"Father! *dear* father!"

"You'd *better* make believe be so glad," said Uncle Lot, his eyes glistening as he spoke.

"Come, come, father, I have authority in these days," said Grace, drawing him towards the house; "so no disrespectful speeches; away with your hat and coat, and sit down in this great chair."

"So ho! Miss Grace," said Uncle Lot, "you are at your old tricks, ordering round as usual. Well, if I must, I must;" so down he sat.

"Father," said Grace, as he was leaving them after a few days' stay, "it's Thanksgiving day next month, and you and mother must come and stay with us."

Accordingly, the following month found Aunt Sally and Uncle Lot by the minister's fireside, delighted witnesses of the Thanksgiving presents which a willing people were pouring in; and the next day they had once more the pleasure of seeing a son of theirs in the sacred desk, and hearing a sermon that everybody said was "the best that he ever preached;" and it is to be remarked, that this was the standing commentary on all James' discourses, so that it was evident he was going on unto perfection.

"There's a great deal that's worth having in this 'ere life after all," said Uncle Lot, as he sat by the coals of the bright evening fire of that day; "that is, if we'd only take it when the Lord lays it in our way."

"Yes," said James; "and let us only take it as we should, and this life will be cheerfulness, and the next fulness of joy."

OLD MADAME.

BY

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

Yours truly
Harriet O. Stanton

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

MRS. SPOFFORD, whose early fame came to her while Miss Prescott, was born in Calais, Me., in 1835. She was the eldest daughter of Joseph N. Prescott. When Harriet was still very young, the family removed to Newburyport, Mass. In this little city at the mouth of the Merrimac, she received an excellent education at the Putnam Free School—an institution with a modest name but of academic standing, and which had the reputation of turning out many accomplished scholars, among whom Harriet Prescott ranked as one of the very brightest; later she attended for two years the Pinkerton Academy in Derry, N. H. At this time the city of her home, Newburyport, contained an unusual number of both men and women of fine intellectual endowment, and into this circle of stimulation, Harriet came as a welcome member. Just at this period, Thomas Wentworth Higginson was a resident of the place and pastor of the Unitarian Church; he took great interest in Miss Prescott, and by many a friendly counsel and suggestion helped her on the way she has since so brilliantly trod. Here she achieved her first local success, as the competitor for a literary prize. Having graduated at the early age of seven teen, she found herself at once in the presence of a family misfortune, which, as the eldest of the family, cast almost the entire responsibility of its support upon her young shoulders. The father had been stricken with paralysis, and her mother became a confirmed invalid. Nothing daunted by this serious outlook she set bravely to work to make her literary talent of practical use. She courageously besieged the story paper offices of Boston with sketches and novelettes. The competition was not so great then as it has since become, and it was not so difficult to get a hearing; but much labor was exacted for diminutive pay, and it

required almost incessant work to procure sufficient funds to meet the most necessary expenses of herself and family. She sometimes wrote for fifteen hours a day, and continued at approximately hard work for many years.

Her wide reputation was acquired almost at a stroke. In 1859 she sent to the *Atlantic Monthly* a story entitled, "In a Cellar." James Russell Lowell was at that time editor of the *Atlantic*, and at first declined to believe that any young lady could have written such a brilliant and characteristic description of Bohemian Parisian life; he insisted that it must be a translation from the French. Convinced at last of its true authorship, it was published, and thenceforward Miss Prescott was always a welcome contributor to its pages; and at that time the endorsement of the *Atlantic* opened all other magazine offices to its writers. Her first novel, "Sir Rohan's Ghost," published in 1859 in Boston, was a very striking work and for skilful plot and effective dramatic *dénouement* has never been exceeded in any of her later works, though a certain crudeness of thought and expression apparent in that, has been entirely eliminated by increased age and experience. This book was reviewed at some length in the *Crayon*, an art journal then published in New York City, and an admitted authority in literary criticism.

One of the most rare gifts of Miss Prescott's genius was her extraordinary affluence of language, which never appeared to be strained or affected any more than the gorgeous tints of a tropical plant. In 1865 Miss Prescott was married to Mr. Richard S. Spofford of Newburyport, a lawyer, and son of Dr. R. S. Spofford, the most eminent physician of Essex County; he was also cousin to the popular and esteemed librarian of the Congressional library in Washington, D. C.

This union proved a particularly happy one, though childless, until the decease of Mr. Spofford during the present (1888) year.

Mrs. Spofford's later works were, "The Amber Gods and Other Stories," published in Boston, 1863; "Azarim," in 1864; "New England Legends," in 1871; "The Thief in the Night," in 1872; "Art Decoration *Applied to* Furniture," published in New York in

1881; "Marquis of Carabas," Boston, 1872; "Hester Stanley at St. Mark's," 1883; "The Servant Girl Question," 1884; and "Ballads about Authors," 1888.

Mrs. Spofford's prolific prose pen does not cause us to forget the many beautiful poems and ballads which she has produced, and best of all they seem to be written because they had first been sung in her heart, and had to burst forth into words. There is no outward sign of artificiality about them.

For many years Mrs. Spofford has resided at Deer Island—a small island in the river Merrimac, in the northerly suburb of Newburyport; the situation is very romantic, and just the place to develop the poetical and imaginative nature. The entire island was purchased for a permanent home, though Mrs. Spofford has spent many of her winters, or a portion of them, in Boston and Washington.

OLD MADAME.

"MISS BARBARA! Barbara, honey! Where's this you're hiding at?" cried old Phillis, tying her bandanna head-gear in a more flamboyant knot over her gray hair and brown face. "Where's this you're hiding at? The Old Madame's after you."

And in answer to the summons, a girl clad in home-spun, but with every line of her lithe figure the lines, one might fancy, of a wood-and water nymph's, came slowly up from the shore and the fishing smacks, with a young fisherman beside her.

Down on the margin, the men were hauling a seine and singing as they hauled; a droger was dropping its dark sails; barefooted urchins were wading in the breaking roller where the boat that the men were launching dipped up and down; women walked with baskets poised lightly on their heads, calling gaily to one another; sands were sparkling, sails were glancing, winds were blowing, waves were curling, voices were singing and laughing,—it was all the scene of a happy, sunshiny, summer morning in the little fishing-hamlet of an island off the coast.

The girl and her companion wound up the stony path, passing Phillis, and paused before a low stone house that seemed only a big bowlder itself, in whose narrow, open hallway, stretching from door to door, leaned a stately old woman on her staff,—a background of the sea rising behind her.

"Did you wish for Barbara, Old Madame?" asked the fisherman, as superb a piece of rude youth and strength as any young Viking.

She fixed him with her glance an instant.

"And you are his grandson?" said the old woman. "You are called by his name—the fourth of the name—Ben Benvoisie? I am not dreaming? You are, sure of it?"

As sure as that you are called Old Madame," he replied, with a grave pride of self-respect, and an air of something solemn in his joy, as if he had but just turned from looking on death to embrace life.

"As sure as that I am called Old Madame," she repeated. "Barbara, come here. As sure as that I am called Old Madame."

But she had not always been Old Madame. A woman not far from ninety now, tall and unbent, with her great black eyes glowing like stars in sunken wells from her face, scarred with the script of sorrow—a proud beggar, preserving in her little coffer only the money that one day should bury her with her haughty kindred—once she was the beautiful Elizabeth Champernoune, the child of noble ancestry, the heiress of unbounded wealth, the last of a great house of honor.

From birth till age, nothing that surrounded her but had its relation to the family grandeur. Her estate—her grandfather's, nay, her great-grandfather's—lay on a goodly island at the mouth of a broad river; an island whose paltry fishing-village of to-day was, before her time, a community where also a handful of other dignitaries dwelt only in less splendor. There were one or two of the ancient fishermen and pilots yet living when she died, who, babbling of their memories, could recall out of their childhood the stately form of her father, the Judge Champernoune, as he walked abroad in his black robes, who came from over seas to marry her mother, the heiress of the hero for whom the King of France had sent—when, in the French and Indian wars, the echoes of his daring deeds rang across the water—to make him Baron Chaslesmarie, with famous grants and largesse.

And in state befitting one whom the King of France had with his own hand exalted, had the prodigal Baron Chaslesmarie spent his days—never, however, discontinuing the vast fisheries of his father, in which he had himself made fortunes before the King had found him out. And although the title died with him, and the pension died before him, for the King of France had, with treacherous complaisance, ceded the island to the enemy one day when war was over, yet

store of land and money were left for the sole child, who became the wife of Judge Champernoune and the mother of Elizabeth.

What a sweet old spot it was in which Elizabeth's girlhood of ideal happiness went by! The house,—a many-gabled dwelling, here of wood and there of brick, with a noble hall where the original cornices and casements had been replaced by others of carved mahogany, the panels of the doors rich with their thick gilding, and the cellars three-deep for the cordials and dainties with which the old Baron Chaslesmarie had stored them,—was a part of it, once brought from foreign shores as the great Government-house. Set in its brilliant gardens, it was a pleasant sight to see—here a broad upper gallery giving airy shelter, there a flight of stairs running from some flower-bed to some casement, with roses and honeysuckles clambering about the balustrade, avenues of ash and sycamore leading away from it, an outer velvet turf surrounding it and ending in a boundary of mossy granite bowlders. The old baron slept in his proud tomb across the bay—by the fort he had defended, the chapel he had built, in the graveyard of his people, proud as he; and Ben Benvoisie, the lad whom gossips said he had snatched from the shores of some Channel Island in one of the wild voyages of his youth, slept at his feet,—but another Ben Benvoisie lived after him. In a dimple between these bowlders of the garden's boundary, Judge Champernoune and his wife and his other child were laid away; there was always something sadly romantic to Elizabeth in the thought of her father walking over the island from time to time, and selecting this spot for his eternal rest, where the rocky walls enclosed him, the snows of winter and the bramble-roses of summer covered him, and the waves, not far remote, sang his long lullaby.

By the time that Elizabeth inherited the place, the importance of the island town had gone up the river to a spot on the mainland, and one by one the great families had followed, the old judge buying the land of them as they went, and their houses, dismembered, with fire and with decay, of a wing here and a gable there, and keeping but little trace of them. The

judge had no thought of leaving; and the people would have felt as if the hand of Providence had been withdrawn had he done so. Nor had Elizabeth any thought of it, when she came to reign in her father's stead and infuse new life into the business of her ancestors, that had continued, as it were, by its own momentum, since, although Judge Champernoune had not thought it beneath his judicial dignity to carry it on as he found it, yet, owing to his other duties, he had not given it that personal attention it had in the vigor and impetus of the Chaslesmaries. She had not a memory that did not belong to the place; certain sunbeams that she recalled slanting down the warehouses rich with the odors of spices and sugar, through which she had wandered as a child, were living things to her; a foggy morning, when an unseen fruiter in the sea-mist made all the air of the island port delicious as some tropical grove, with its cargo of lemons, seemed like a journey to the ends of ends of the earth. And the place itself was her demesne, she its acknowledged *châtelaine;* there was not a woman in the town who had not served in her mother's kitchen or hall; it was in her fishing-smacks the men went out to sea, in her brigs they ran down to the West Indian waters and over to the Mediterranean ports—perhaps, alas, the African; it was her warehouses they filled with goods from far countries, which her agents scattered over the land—for a commerce that, beginning with the supplying of the fishing-fleets, had swelled into a great foreign trade. And their homes were all that she could make them in their degree; their children she herself attended in sudden illness, having been reared as her mother was before her, in the homely surgery and herb craft proper to those that had others in their charge; and many a stormy night, in later years, did the good Dame Elizabeth leave her own children in their downy nests, and hasten to ease some child going out of the world on the horrible hoarse breath of croup, or to bring other children into the world in scorn of doctors three miles off.

She was twenty five when the step-son of her father's sister, her cousin by marriage but not by *blood, appeared* to fulfil the agreement of their parents,

to take effect when he should finish his travels—which indeed, he had been in no haste to end. She had not been without suitors, of high and low degree. Had not the heir of the Canadian governor spoken of a treaty for the hand of this fair princess? Was it not Ben Benvoisie, the bold young master of a fishing-smack, with whom she had played when a child, who once would have carried her off to sea like any Norse pirate, and who had dared to leave his kiss red on her lips? Had Elizabeth been guilty of thinking that, had she been a river-pilot's daughter, such kisses would not come amiss?

Yet long ago had she understood that she was pledged to her cousin Louis, and she waited for his coming. His eyes were as blue as hers were brown, his hair as black as hers was red, his features as Greek as hers were Norman, his stature as commanding as her own.

"Oh, he was a beauty, my cousin Louis was!" she used to say.

She never called him her lover, nor her husband—he was always her cousin Louis.

"So you have come, sir," she said, when he stepped ashore, and crossed the street and met her at the gate, and would have kissed her brow. "More slowly, sir," she said, drawing back. "You have come to win, not to wear. Elizabeth Chaslesmarie Champernoune is not a ribbon or a rose, to be tossed aside and picked up at will."

"By the Lord!" cried Cousin Louis. "If I had dreamed she were the rose she is, the salt seas would not have been running all these years between me and her sweetness—and her thorns."

"This is no court, and these no court-ladies, Cousin Louis," she replied. "We are plain people, used only to plain speeches."

"Plain, indeed," said Cousin Louis. "Only Helen of Troy was plainer!"

"Nor do flattering words," she said, "well befit those whose slow coming flatters ill."

But the smile with which she uttered her somewhat bitter speech was of enchanting good-humor, and Cousin Louis thought his lines had fallen in pleasant places.

He was not so sure of it when a month had passed, and the same smile sweetened an icy manner still, and he had not yet been able, in the rush of guests that surrounded her, to have a word alone with Elizabeth. He saw that jackanapes of a young West Indian planter bring the color to her cheek with his whispered word. He saw her stroll down between the sycamores, unattended by any save Captain Wentworth. But let him strive to gain her ear and one of the young officers from Fort Chaslesmarie was sure to intercept him,—strive to speak with her, and Dorothy and Jean and Margaret and Belle seemed to spring from the ground to her side. From smiling he changed to sullen, and from sullen to savage—to abuse his folly, to abuse her coquetry, to wonder if he cared enough for the winning of her to endure these indignities, and all at once to discover that this month had taught him there was but one woman in the world for him, and all the rest were shadows. One woman in the world,—and without her, life was so incomplete, himself so halved, that death would be the better portion.

How then? What to do? Patience gave up the siege. He was thinking of desperate measures on the day when, moping around the shores alone in a boat, he espied them riding from the Beacon Hill down upon the broad ferry-boat that crossed the shallow inlet. How his heart knocked his sides as he saw that pale, dark West Indian, with his purple velvet corduroys, and his nankeen jacket and jockey-cap, riding down beside her,—as he saw Wentworth spring from the stirrup to offer a palm for her foot when they reached the door! But Cousin Louis had not waited for that; he had put some strength to his strokes and was at the door before him, was at her side before him, compelling his withdrawal, offering no palm to tread on, but reaching up and grasping her waist with his two hands.

"By heaven!" he murmured then, as Wentworth was beyond hearing, his eyes blazing on hers. "What man do you think will endure this? What man will suffer this suspense in which you keep me?"

"It is you, Cousin Louis, who are keeping me in suspense," she answered, as she hung above him there.

And was there anything in her arch tone that gave him hope? He released her then, but when an hour

later he met her again, "Very well," he said, in the suppressed key of his passion. "I will keep you in the suspense you spoke of no more. You will marry me this day, or not at all. By my soul, I will wait no longer for my answer!"

"You have never asked me, sir, before," she said. "How could you have an answer? I hardly know if you have asked me now.

But that sunset, with Belle and Margaret and Jean and Dorothy, she strolled down to the little church, that by some hidden password was half-filled with the fishing-people and her servants. And when she came back, she was leaning on Cousin Louis's arm very differently from her usual habit, and the girls were going on before.

"If I had known this Cossack fashion was the way to win," Cousin Louis was saying—when a scream from Margaret and Belle and Dorothy and Jean rang back to them, and hurrying forward, they found the girls with their outcry between two drawn swords, for Wentworth and the West Indian had come down into the moonlit glade to finish a sudden quarrel that had arisen over their wine, as to the preferences of the fair *châtelaine.*

"Put up your swords, gentlemen," said Cousin Louis, with his proud, happy smile, "unless you wish to measure them with mine. It would be folly to fight about nothing. And there is no such person as Elizabeth Champernoune."

The men turned white in the moonlight to see the lovely creature standing there, and before they had time for anger or amazement, Elizabeth said after him;

"There is no such person as Elizabeth Champernoune. She married, an hour ago, her cousin Louis."

Ah me, that all these passions now should be but idle air! Perhaps the hearts of the gallants swelled and sank and swelled again, as they looked at her, beautiful, rosy and glowing, in the broad white beam that bathed her. They put up their swords, and went to the house and drank her health and were rowed away.

Elizabeth and Cousin Louis settled down to their long life of promised happiness, in the hospitality of

an open hearth around which friends and children clustered, blest, it seemed, by fortune and by fate. Gay parties came and went from the town above, from larger and more distant towns, from the village and port across the bay. Life was all one long, sweet holiday. What pride and joy was theirs when the son Chaslesmarie was born; what tender bliss Elizabeth's when the velvet face of the little Louise first lay beneath her own and she sank away with her into a land of downy dreams, conscious only of the wings of love hovering over her! How, at once, as child after child came, they seemed to turn into waternixies, taking to the sea as naturally as the gulls flying around the cliffs! How each loiterer in the village would make the children his own, teaching them every prank of the waves, taking them in boats far beyond the outer light, bringing them through the breakers after dark, wrapped in great pilot-coats and drenched with foam! She never knew what was fear for her five boys, the foster-brothers of all the other children in the village; only the little maiden Louise, pale as the rose that grew beneath the oriel, she kept under her eye as she might, bringing her up in fine household arts and delicate accomplishments, ignorant of the shadow of Ben Benvoisie stalking so close behind as to darken all her work.

Her husband had taken the great business that Elizabeth's people had so long carried on through their glories and titles, their soldiery and war, their other pursuits if they had them; his warehouse lined the shores, the offing was full of his ships, he owned almost the last rod of land on the island and much along the main. He did not pretend to maintain the state of the old baron; but to be a guest at Chaslesmarie was to live a charmed life awhile. He was a man of singular uprightness; as he grew older apt to bursts of anger, yet to Elizabeth and to his household he was gentleness itself; some men trembled at the sound of his voice, but children never did. If he was not so beloved as his wife by the fishing-people, it was because he was not recognized master as of right, and because he exacted his due, although tossing it in the lap of the next needy one. But he was a person with whom no other took a liberty.

"A king among men, was my cousin Louis," Old Madame used to say, and sigh and sigh and sigh again as she said it.

But the hospitality of the island was not all that of pleasure and sumptuous ease. It was a place easily reached by sail from one or more of the great towns, by boat from the town above; and in the stirring and muttering of political discontent, the gentlemen who appeared and disappeared at all hours of the day, and as often by night, folded in cloaks wet with the salt sea spray, wore spurs at their heels and swords at their sides to some purpose. And when at last war came—Horror of horrors, what was this! Cousin Louis and his island had renounced allegiance to the crown, and had taken the side of the colonial rebels and the Continental Congress.

"We!" cried Elizabeth, who knew little of such things, and had a vague idea that they owed fealty still to that throne at whose foot her grandfather had knelt. "We, whom the King of France ennobled and enriched!"

"And for that price were we sold ere we were born, and do we stay slaves handed about from one ruler to another?" her husband answered her. "We have ennobled and enriched ourselves. We have twice and thrice repaid the kings of France in tribute money. Soon shall the kings of France go the way of all the world—may the kings of Britain follow them! Henceforth, the people put on the crown. I believe in the rights of man. I live under no tyranny—but yours," he said gayly.

"A Chaslesmarie! A Champernoune!" Elizabeth was saying to herself, heedless of his smile.

"We are an insignificant islet," her husband urged. "The kings of France have betrayed us. The kings of Britain have oppressed us. We renounce the one. We defy the other!" And he ran the flag under which the rebels fought up the staff at Chaslesmarie, and it was to be seen at the peak of all his brigantines and sloops that, leaving their legitimate affairs, armed themselves and scoured the seas, and brought their prizes into port. But freely as this wealth came in, as freely it went out; for Cousin Louis did nothing by the halves. And heart and soul being in the matter, it is

safe to say that not one guinea of the gold his sailors brought him in, during that long struggle, remained to him at its close.

It was during this struggle that, when one day the sloop *Adder's-tongue* sailed, the elder son of Ben Benvoisie—who had along since married a fisherman's daughter—was found on board, a stowaway. Great was Ben Benvoisie's wrath when he missed his son; but there was nothing to be done. He rejected Cousin Louis's regrets with scorn. But when the sloop brought in her prizes, and the first man ashore told him his son had died of some ailment before he sighted an enemy, then his rage rose in a flame, he towered like an angry god, and standing on the head of the wharf, in the presence of all the people, he cursed Cousin Louis, root and branch, at home and abroad,—a black cloud full of bursting lightnings rising behind him, as he spoke, as if he had a confederate in evil powers.—cursed him in wild and stinging words that made the blood run cold, that cut Cousin Louis to the heart, that, when they were repeated to her, made even Elizabeth turn faint and sick. "There is a strange second-sight with those Benvoisies," she said. "God grant his curses come to naught." But she hardly ever saw him at a distance without an instant's prayer, and she knew that the fishing-people always after that sight of him standing there at the head of the wharf, with his blazing eyes and streaming hair, and the rain and the lightning and the thunder volleying around him, held some superstitions of their own regarding the evil eye of the Benvoisies, and kept some silent watch to see what would come of it all.

But the war at last was ended, the world was trying to regain its equilibrium, and continental money was at hand on every side, and little other. Cousin Louis, who had faith in the new republic, believed with an equally hot head in its good faith, and sent word far and near that he would redeem the current paper, dollar for dollar in gold. And he did so. There were barrels of it in his warehouse garrets, and his grandchildren had it to play with. "It is Ben Benvoisie's word, said Elizabeth, when they saw the mistake. But Cousin Louis laughed and kissed her, and said it had sunk a good deal of treasure, to be sure, but

asked if Ben Benvoisie's word was to outweigh his fisheries and fleets and warehouses and hay-lands—his splendid boys, his girl Louise! And he caught the shrinking, slender creature to his heart as he spoke—this lovely young Louise, as fair and fragile as a lily on its stem, whom he loved as he loved his life, his flower-girl, as he called her, just blossoming into girlhood, with the pale rose-tint on her cheek, and her eyes like the azure larkspur. How was he, absorbed in his counting-room, forgetful at his dinner table, taking his pleasures with guests, with gayeties, to know that his slip of a girl, not yet sixteen, met a handsome hazel-eyed lad at the foot of the long garden every night,—Ben Benvoisie the third,—and had promised to go with him, his wife, in boy's clothes, whenever the fruiter was ready for sea again! But old Ben Benvoisie knew it; and he could not forbear his savage jeer, and the end was that Cousin Louis, at the foot of the long garden one night, put a bullet through young Ben Benvoisie's arm, and carried off his fainting girl to her room that she showed no wish to leave again. "She will die," said Cousin Louis, one day toward the year's close, "if we do not give way."

"She had better," said Elizabeth, who knew what the misery of her child's marriage with old Ben Benvoisie's son must needs be when the first glamor of young passion should be over.

And she did. And Cousin Louis's heart went down into the grave with her.

"It is not only old Ben Benvoisie's word," said Elizabeth. "It is his hand."

Her secret tears were bitter for the child, but not so bitter as they would have been had she first passed into old Ben Benvoisie's power, and been made the instrument for humbling the pride and breaking the heart daily of her brothers Chaslesmarie and Champernonne, and of the hated owner of the *Adder's-tongue*, had she lived to smart and suffer under the difference between the rude race, reared in a fishing-hut, and that reared in the mansion of her ancestors. Perhaps Old Madame never saw the thing fairly; it always seemed to her that Louise died of some disease incident to childhood. "I have my boys left," said Elizabeth. "And no one can disturb my little grave."

It was two graves the second year after. For Chaslesmarie, her first-born and her darling, whose baby kisses had been sweeter than her lover's, the life in whose little limbs and whose delicious flesh had been dearer than her own, his bright head now brighter for the fresh laurels of Harvard,—Chaslesmarie, riding down from the Beacon Hill, where he had gone to see the fishing-fleet make sail, was thrown from his horse, and did not live long enough to tell who was the man starting from the covert of bayberry-bushes. But Elizabeth carried a stout heart and a high head. She could not, if she would, have bent as Cousin Louis did, nor did the proud serenity leave her eye, although his darkened with a sadness never lightened. None knew her pangs, nor saw the tears that stained her pillow in the night; she would if she could, have hid her suffering from herself. She began to feel a terrible assurance that she was fighting fate, but she would make a hard fight of it. Conscious of her integrity of purpose, of the justice of her claims, of her right to the children she had borne, there was something in her of the spirit of the ancients who dared, if not to defy the gods, yet to accept the combat offered by them. Champernoune was the heir instead, that was all. Then there were the twin boys, Max and Rex, two lawless young souls; and the youngest of all, St. Jean, whose head always wore a halo in Elizabeth's eyes. With these, why should she grieve? Now she was also the mother of angels!

Again, after a while, the frequent festivities filled the house, and the great gold and silver plate glittered in the dark dining-room and filled it, at every touch, with melodious and tremulous vibrations. Now the Legislature of the State, one and all, attended a grand banqueting there, now the Governor and his Council; now navy-yard and fort and town, and far-off towns, came to the balls that did not end even with the bright outdoor breakfast, but ran into the next night's dancing, and a whole week's gayety; now it was boating and bathing in the creeks; now it was sailing out beyond the last lights with music and flowers and cheer; and all the time it was splendor and sumptuousness and life at the breaking crest. And Elizabeth led the dance, the stateliest of the stately, the most

beautiful still of the beautiful. And if sometimes she saw old Ben Benvoisie's eyes, as he leaned over the gate and looked at her a moment within the gardens and among her roses, it was not to shudder at them. What possessed Elizabeth in those days? She only felt that the currents of her blood must sweep along in this mad way, or the heart would stop.

Then came Champernoune's wedding,—he and that friend whom the chief magistrate of the land delighted to honor, marrying sisters in one night. How lovely, how gracious, how young the bride! Was it at Gonaives that year that she died dancing? Was it at Gonaives that the yellow-fever buried Champernoune in the common trench?

Elizabeth was coming up the landing from the boat, her little negro dwarf carrying her baskets, when the news reached her quick senses, as the one that spoke it meant it should; she staggered and fell. The doctors came to bind up the broken bones, and only when they said, "At last it is quite right; but, dear lady, your dancing days are over," did any see her tears. She had buried her only girl, her first-born boy, her married heir, without great signs of sorrow. She had plunged into a burning house in the village once, gathering her gauzy skirts about her, to bring out the little Louise whom an unfaithful nurse had taken there and forsaken in her fright; she had waded, torch in hand, into the wildly rolling surf of a starless night to clutch the bow of Chaselesmarie's boat that was sweeping helplessly to the breaker with the unskilled child at the helm; she had shut herself up with Champernoune, when Ben Benvoisie brought back the small-pox to the village, and had suffered no one to minister to him but herself; and when the dog all thought mad tore Cousin Louis's arm, she herself had sucked the poison from the wound.

Yet with that sentence, that absurd little sentence, that her dancing days were over, it seemed all at once to Elizabeth that everything else was over, too. With Champernoune now everything else had gone—state and splendor, peace and pleasure, hospitality and home and hearth, and all the rest. All things had been possible to her, the mastery of her inner joy itself in one form or another, while she held her forces under

her. But now she herself was stricken, and who was to fight for them? Who, when the stars in their courses fought against Sisera!

But as wild as the grief of Cousin Louis was, hers was as still, though there were ashes on her heart. She went about with a cane when she got up, unable to step a minuet or bend a knee in prayer. "But see," cried old Ben Benvoisie to himself, "her head is just as high!"

Not so with Cousin Louis. He sat in his counting-room, his face bent on his hands half the time. Cargoes came in unheeded, reports were made him unregarded, ships lay at the wharf unloaded, the state of the market did not concern him—nothing seemed of any matter but those three graves. Then he roused himself to a spasmodic activity, gave orders here and orders there, but his mind was otherwhere. With the striking of the year's balance he had made bad bargains, taken bad debts, sent out bad men with his fleets, brought in his fares and his fruits and foreign goods at a bad season, lost the labor of years. A fire had reduced a great property elsewhere to ashes, a storm had scattered and destroyed his southern ships. "Something must be done," said Cousin Louis. And he looked back from his counting-room, on the fair mansion from whose windows he had so long heard song and laughter floating, with its gardens round about it, where the sweet-briar and the tall white rose climbed and looked back at the red rose blushing at their feet, where the honeysuckles shed their fragrance, where the great butterflies waved their wings over all the sweet old-fashioned flowers that had been brought from the gardens of France and summer after summer had bloomed and spiced the air, where the golden robins flashed from bough to bough of the lane of plum-trees, and the sunshine lay vivid on the encircling velvet verdure. "Her home, and the home of her people for a century behind her—the people whose blood in her veins went to make her what she is—noblest woman, sweetest wife that ever made a man's delight. The purest, proudest, loftiest soul that looks heaven in the face. O God, bless her, my dear wife—dearer than when I wooed you or when I wedded you, by all the long increase of years! Something

must be done," said Cousin Louis, "or that will go with the rest."

Perhaps Cousin Louis began to forefeel the future then. Certainly, as a little time passed on, an unused timidity overwhelmed him. Against Elizabeth's advice he began to call in various moneys from here and there where they were gathering more to themselves. "There is to be another war with the British," he said. "We must look to our fortunes." But he would not have any interference with their way of life, the way Elizabeth had always lived. There must still be the dinner to the judges, the supper to the clergy, the frequent teas to the ladies of the fort, the midsummer throng of young people, the house full for the Christmas holidays; Max and Rex were to be thought of, St. Jean was not to grow up remembering a house of mourning. Why had no one told them that, in all the festive season before Champernoune's death, the younger boys not being held then to strict account, old Ben Benvoisie, sitting with them on the sea-beaten rocks, had fired their fancy with stories of the wild sea-life that had blanched his hair and furrowed his face before the time? One day St. Jean came in to break the news: Max and Rex had run away to sea. "I should have liked to go," said St. Jean, "but I could not leave my mother so."

"By the gods!" said his father. "You shall go master of the best ship I have!" And in due time he sent him supercargo to the East, that he might learn all that a lad who had tumbled about among ropes and blocks and waves and rocks, ever since his birth, did not already know. But he forbade his wife to repeat to him the names of Rex and Max; nor would they ever again have been mentioned in his presence but for the report of a ship that had spoken the craft they took, and learned that it had been overhauled, and Max, of whom nothing more was ever heard, pressed into the British service, and Rex, ordered aloft on a stormy night, had fallen from the yard into the sea, and his grave was rolled between two waves.

As Elizabeth came home from the little church—the first time she went out after this—thinking, as she went, of the twilight when she found Champernoune, who had stolen from the lightsome scenes that greeted

him and his young bride, to stand a little while beside the grave where his brother Chaslesmarie slept—she met old Ben Benvoisie.

"Well," he said, "you know how good it is yourself."

"Is not the curse fulfilled, Ben Benvoisie?" she demanded. "Are you going to spare me none?"

"None," said Ben Benvoisie.

The servants were running toward her when she reached the house. The master had a stroke. A stroke indeed. He sat in his chair a year, head and face white, speaking of nothing but his children's graves, they thought. "Too cold—too damp. Why did I bury there?" he murmured, "I will go have them up," he said. "Oh, why did I bury so deep—cold—cold—Elizabeth!" But when Elizabeth answered him, the thing he would say had gone, and when he died at last, for all his struggle for speech, it was still unspoken.

Ah, what a year was that when the long strain was over, and she had placed him where she was to lie herself, at her father's feet! Things went on as they would that year. Wrapped in an ashen apathy, Elizabeth hardly knew she breathed, and living less at that time in this world than the other, the things of this world had small concern for her. Born, too, and reared in wealth, she could as easily have understood that there was any other atmosphere about her as any other condition; and the rogues, then, had it all their own way. Suits for western lands that were the territorial possessions of princes were compromised for sums she never saw; blocks of city houses were sold for taxes; heaven knows what else was done, what rights were signed away on papers brought for her name as administratrix. And when St. Jean came home from sea, where were the various moneys that his father had been calling in for so long a time? There was not a penny of them to be accounted for.

St. Jean was a man before his time. He looked about him. The great business had gone to the dogs, and some of the clerks and factors had gone with it; at least, they too had disappeared. Other men, in other places, had taken advantage of the lapse, established other houses, opened other fisheries, stolen their

markets. There was not enough of either fleet left in condition to weather a gale. "It has all been at the top of the wave," said St. Jean, "and now we are in the trough of the sea." But he had his ship, the *Great-heart*, and with that he set about redeeming his fortunes. And his first step was to bring home to his mother a daughter-in-law as proud as she—Hope, the orphan of a West Indian prelate, with no fortune but her face, and with manners that Elizabeth thought unbecoming so penniless a woman.

When St. Jean went away to sea again, he established his wife—Little Madame, the people had styled her—in a home of her own; for large as the Mansion was, it was not large enough to hold those two women: a home in a long low stone house that belonged to the estate and had once been two or three houses together,—at which one looked twice, you might say, to see if it were dwelling or bowlder,—and which he renovated and then filled with some of the spare pictures and furnishings of the Mansion-house. And there Hope lived, cheered Elizabeth what she could, and cared for the children that came to her—and how many came! And Elizabeth, who could never feel that Hope had quite the right to a place as her rival in St. Jean's affections, took these little children to her heart, if she could not yet altogether take their mother; and they filled for her many a weary hour of St. Jean's absences on his long voyages,—St. Jean who, in some miraculous way, now represented to her father and husband and son.

Elizabeth had time enough for the little people; for friends did not disturb her much after the first visits of condolence. Trouble had come to many of them, as well. Dorothy and Margaret and Belle and Jean, and their compeers, were scattered and dead and absorbed and forgetful, and she summoned none of them about her any more with music and feasting. Of all her wealth now nothing remained but a part of the land on the island and the adjoining main, with its slight and fickle revenue. Of all her concourse of servants there were only Phillis and Scip, who would have thought themselves transferred to some other world had they left Old Madame.

But the Mansion of Chaslesmarie was a place of

pleasure to the children still, at any rate, and the little swarm spent many an hour in the old box-bordered garden, where the stately lady walked on Phillis's arm, and in the great hall where she told them the history of each of the personages of the tall portraits, from that of the fierce old Chaslesmarie of all down to the angel-faced child St. Jean: told them, not as firing pride with memories of ancient pride, but as storied incidents of family life; and as she told them she seemed to live over her share in them, and place and race and memories seemed only a part of herself.

"Madame," said St. Jean once, when at home,—no child of hers had often called her mother,—"I think if we sold the place and moved away we would do well. The soil is used up, the race is run out—if we transplanted and made new stock? Here is no chance to educate the children or to rebuild our fortunes now. Somewhere else, it may be, I could put myself in better business connection——"

The gaze of his mother's burning black eyes bade him to silence. She felt as if in that moment he had forsworn his ancestors.

"Leave this place of whose dust we are made!" she cried. "Or is it made of the dust of the Chaslesmaries? And how short-sighted—here, where, at least, we reign! Never shall we leave it! See, St. Jean, it is all yours,"—and from command her voice took on entreaty, and how could St. Jean resist the pleading mother! He went away to sea again, and left all as before.

But the earth had moved to Elizabeth with just one thrill and tremor. The idea, the possibility, of leaving the place into which every fibre of her being was wrought had shaken her. It was a sort of conscious death into whose blackness she looked for one moment —so one might feel about to lose identity. She walked through the rooms with their quaint and rich old furnishing, sombre and heavy, their gilded panels, their carved wainscot, the old French portraits of her people that looked down on her and seemed to claim her; she paused in the oriel of the yellow drawing-room, where it always seemed like a sunshiny afternoon in an October beech-wood—paused, and looked across the bay.

There gleamed the battlements of the fort that her grandfather, the baron, had built; there was the church below, there was the tomb, among the graves of those whose powers had come to their flower in him; the grassy knoll, beyond, gleamed in the gold of the slant sun and reminded her of the days when, a child, she used to watch the last glint on the low swells of the graves, across the blue waters of the bay whose rocky islets rose red with the rust of the tides. Far out, the seas were breaking in a white line over the low red ledge, and, farther still, the lighthouse on the dim old Wrecker's Reef was kindling its spark to answer the light on the head of Chaslesmarie that her grandfather had first hung in the air. Close at hand, a boat made in, piled high at either end with the brown sea-weed, the fishing-sails were flitting here and there, as there had never been a day when they were not, and the whole, bathed with the deepening sunset glow, glittered in peace and beauty. There had not been ten days in all her life when she had not looked upon the scene. No, no, no! As well give up life itself, for this was all there was of life to her. There was the shore where, when a child, she found the bed of garnets that the next tide washed away; here could she just remember having seen the glorious old Baron Chaslesmarie, with his men-at-arms about him; here had her dear father proudly walked, with his air of inflexible justice, and the wind had seized his black robes and swept them about her, running at his side; here had her mother died; here had she first seen the superb patrician beauty of her husband's face when he came from France, with his head full of Jean Jacques and the rights of man; here was the little chapel where they married, the linden avenue up which they strolled, with the branches shaking out fragrance and star-beams together above them—the first hour, the first delightful hour, they ever were alone together, she and her Cousin Louis. Oh, here had been her life with him—a husband tenderer than a lover, a man whose loftiness lifted his race and taught her how upright other men might be, a soul so pure that the light of God seemed to shine through it upon her! Here had been her joys, here had been her sorrows; here had she put her love away and heard the molds ring down on that dear

head; here had the world darkened to her, here should it darken to her forever when all the shadows of the grave lengthened around her. Father and mother, husband and child, race and land, they were all in this spot. These people, all of whom she knew by name, were they not like her own; could the warmth of the blood bring much nearer to her these faces that had surrounded her since time begun—these men and women whose lives she had ordered, whose children had been fostered with her children, who half-worshiped her in her girlhood, who half-worshiped her still as Old Madame? Could she leave them? Not though St. Jean's *Great-heart* went down,—St. Jean's ship for which Hope on her houetop sas so long watching. "I refuse to think of it," she said. "It is infinitely tiresome." And then the children trooped in and stopped further soliloquy, and she let them dress themselves out in her stiff old brocades that had been sent for just after she married and had never needed to be renewed,—the cloth of-silver and peach-bloom, the flowered Venetian, the gold-shot white paduasoy; she liked to see the pretty Barbara and Helena and Bess prancing about the shining floors, holding up the long draperies, and she would have decked them out in her old silver-set jewels, too, had they not been parted with long since when Cousin Louis was calling in their moneys. It all renewed her youth so sweetly, if so sadly, and the mimic play in some obscure way making her feel they only played at life, relieved her of a sense of responsibility regarding their real life. When they tired of their finery, she led them down, as usual, before the portrait of this one and of that, and told over the old stories they liked to hear.

"Madame," said little Barbara, lifting her stiff peach-blossom draperies, "why is it always 'then,'—why is it never 'now'?"

But the old dame's heart did not once cry Ichabod. To her the glory never had departed. It was as imperishable as sky and air.

It was the threatened war-time again at last; and Hope, with her sweet, soft eyes watching from the housetop, saw her husband's ship come in, and with it its consort—just a day too late. The embargo had

been declared, and, unknowingly; he hailed from a forbidden port. Other sailors touched other ports and took out false papers for protection. St. Jean scorned the act. He relied on public justice: he relied on a reed. His cargoes were confiscated, and his ships were left at the wharf to rot before he could get hearing. In those two vessels was the result of his years of storm and calm, nights when the ship was heavy by the head with ice, days when her seamy sides were scorched and blistered by the sun, the best part of his life. And gone because he preferred poverty to perjury.

"Better so," said Old Madame. "I am prouder of my penniless son than of any merchant prince with a false oath on his soul." And her own contentment seemed to her all that could be asked. She never thought of regretting the matter; but she despised the General Government more than ever, and would have shown blue-lights to the enemy, had he been near and wanted a channel, were it not that he was Cousin Louis's enemy as well.

Alas! a bitterer enemy was near. One tempestuous winter's night the minute-guns were heard off Wrecker's Reef,—and who but St. Jean must lead the rescue? Hope, cloaked and on her housetop, with the glass saw it all; saw St. Jean climb the reef as the moon ran out on the end of a flying scud of cloud to glance on the foam-edged roll of the black wild seas, saw the others following along the sides of the ice-sheathed rock to carry succor to the freezing castaways, and saw, too, a plunging portion of the wreck strike one form, and hurl it headlong. It was her husband. And although he was brought back alive, yet the blow upon his breast, and the night's exposure in the icy waters, in his disheartened state, did deathly work upon St. Jean, and he was laid low and helpless long before his release.

Then Elizabeth sold the hay-fields along the mainland to pay the doctor's bills and the druggist's, to try softer air for the prostrated man, to bring him home again. She had loved to see the sun ripening the long stretch of their rich grasses with reds and purples, with russets and fresh-bursting green again, as far as eye could see. But she forgot she had ever owned them,

or owning them had lost them. They were there still when she gazed that way. Then the Thierry place followed, and the little Hasard houses,—they had not yet learned how to be poor.

"There is the quarry," said St. Jean, his heart sore as his hand was feeble. "We cannot work it now."

"The grocer took it long ago," said Elizabeth.

"And the Podarzhon orchard?"

"Oh, the Podarzhon orchard! Yes, your great-grandsire used to call it his pot of money. Well, the trees were old and ran to wood,—your father renewed so many! But the apples had lost their flavor,—what apples they used to be! Oh, yes, we ate up the Podarzhon orchard some time since. And the lamb-pasture brought the children their great-coats and shoes last year. And the barley-field— How lucky that we happened to have them, my dear!"

"And I dying," groaned St. Jean. "What, what is to become of them!"

"To become of them!" said the unfaltering spirit. "Is there question what will become of any of the blood of Chaslesmarie?"

A night came, at length, when Hope fainted in her arms—Elizabeth's last child was dead. "A white name and a white soul," said Elizabeth. "I thank God I knew him!" And the Geoffrey field went to bury him. "I shall be with him soon," she said, smiling, not weeping. "Heaven can hardly be more holy than he made earth seem, he was so like a saint!" After that, she felt as if he had no more than gone on one of his long voyages. She sold the few acres of the Millet farm in a month or two; they had nothing else to live on now but such small sales; and from a portion of the proceeds she put aside, in a little hair-covered coffer, her grave-clothes, with the money, in crisp bank-notes, that should one day suffice to lay her away decently between her graves. And then she and Hope sat down and spent their days telling over the virtues of their dead.

It was a summer day, when the late wild-roses were just drooping on their stems and the wanton blackberry vines were everywhere putting out their arms, and all things hung a little heavily in the still air before the thunder-storm, that Elizabeth climbed alone,

with her staff, to the dimple among the rocks where her dear ones lay. She paused at the top to look around her. Here swept the encircling river, with the red rocks rising from its azure; beyond it the mainland lifted softly swelling fields that had once belonged to her ancestors of glorious memory; far away to the south and east, over its ledges and reefs mounting purple to the bending sky, stretched the sea, its foaming fields also once theirs and yielding them its revenues. Now,—nothing but these graves, she said; the graves of renown, of honor, of lofty purity. "No, no," said Elizabeth, aloud. "Renown, honor, purity are not buried here. St. Jean's children cannot be robbed of that inheritance. Fire that still burns must burst through the ashes. It is fallen indeed; but with these children it shall begin its upward way again!"

"Its upward way again," said a deep voice. And, half-starting, she turned to see old Ben Benvoisie sitting on one of the graves below her.

"So you are satisfied at last, Ben Benvoisie," said Elizabeth, after a moment's gazing.

"Satisfied with what?"

"Satisfied that not one child is left to my arms, and that, when the mortgage on the Mansion falls due, not one acre of my birthright is left to my name."

"Do you think I did it, then, Old Madame?" asked the man, pulling his cloak about him. "Am I one of the forces of nature? You flatter me! Am I the pride, the waste, the love of pleasure, the heedlessness of the morrow, the self-confidence of your race, that forgot there was a world outside the sound of the name of Chaslesmarie? Did I take one life away from you?" he cried, as he tottered to his stick. "Nay, once I would have given you my own! Did I take a penny of your wealth? I am as poor to-day as I was seventy years ago when I laid my life at your feet, and you laughed and scorned and spurned it, and thought so lightly of it you forgot it!"

Elizabeth was silent a little. Her hood fell back, and there streamed out a long lock of her silver hair in which still burned a gleam of gold; her black eyes, softer than once they were, met quietly the gaze that was reading the writing of the lines cut in her face,

like the lines whipped into stone by the sharp sands of the desert.

"It was not these leveling days," she said. "I was the child of nobles——"

"And I was a worm at your feet. A worm with a sting, you found. But it was not you I cursed," he cried in a horse passion,—"not you, Elizabeth Champernoune! It was the master——"

"Louis and I were one," she answered him. "We are one still. A part of him is here above the sod; a part of me is there below it. We shall rest beside each other soon, as we did every night of forty years. Soon you, too, Ben Benvoisie, will go to your long sleep, and neither your bannering nor your blessing will help or hurt the generation that is to come."

"Will it not?" he said. And he laughed a low laugh half under his breath. "Yet the generations repeat themselves. Look there!" And he wheeled about suddenly and pointed with his stick, as if it had been an old wizard's wand. "Look yonder at the beach," he said. "On the flat bowlder by which we found the bed of garnets when you and I were too young —eighty years ago, is it?—to know that you were the child of nobles, and I a worm!"

And there, on the low, flat rock, distinct against the turbid darkness of the sky, sat the pretty Barbara, a brown-eyed lass of sixteen, and the arm about her shoulder was the arm of young Ben Benvoisie, the old man's grandson, and his face, a handsome tawny face with the blue fire of its eyes, was bent toward hers—and hers were lifted.

"Leave them to their dream a little while, Old Madame, before you wake them," said the old man, in a strangely altered voice.

"I shall not wake them," said Elizabeth.

And they were silent a moment again, looking down at the figures on the rocks. And the two faces that had bent together there, had clung together in their first long sweet kiss of love, parted, with the redness of innocent blushes on them, and were raised toward the distant sea, now dimly streaked with foam and wind.

"I have seen ninety years," said old Ben Benvoisie. "And you, Old Madame?"

"I have lived eighty-five," she answered, absently.

"Long years, long years," he said. "But, at last," he said, "at last, Dame Elizabeth, my flesh and blood and yours are one!"

Elizabeth turned to move away, but his voice again arrested her. "Look ye!" he said. "When those two are one, once and forever, when Chaslesmarie is sunk in Benvoisie, when you are conquered at last, I shall tell them where Master Louis buried his moneys, Old Madame!"

She had been going on without a word; but she stopped and looked back over her shoulder. "Only they are conquered, Ben Benvoisie, who contend," she said. "And I have never contended. Perhaps I had rather see her dead. I do not know. But Barbara has her own life to live in these changed times. She is too young, I am too old, to make her live mine. And were I conquered," she cried in a great voice, "it is not by you, but by age and the slow years and death! I defy you, as I have defied Fate! For, take the bread from my mouth, the mantle from my back, yet while I live the current in my veins remains," cried the old Titaness, "and while I live that current will always run with the courage and the honor of the Chaslesmaries and Champernounes!"

"Not so," said the other. "Conquered you are. Conquered because your race ceases. Because Chaslesmarie is swallowed up in Benvoisie, as death is swallowed up in victory!"

But she had gone on into the gathering darkness of the storm, from which the young people fled up the shore, and heard no more. And the storm burst about the island, and the old Chaslesmarie Mansion answered it in roof and rafter, trembling as if to the buffets of striving elemental foes. And all at once the flames wrapped it; and gilded wainscot, Dutch carving, ancestral portraits, were only a pile of hissing cinders when the morning sun glittered on rain-drops, rocks, and river. And Elizabeth, with her little hair-coffer of cere-clothes and money, had gone to Hope's cottage, and old Ben Benvoisie was found stretched upon the grave where she had seen him sitting. And they never knew where Cousin Louis had buried his money.

"Miss Barbara! Barbara, honey!" called old Phillis, again, a little before noon. "Where's this you's hiding at? Old Madame wants ye. Don't ye hear me tell?"

And pretty Barbara came hesitatingly up the rocks that made each dwelling in the place look as if it were a part of the island itself, tearful and rosy and sparkling. And by her side, grave as became him that day, and erect and proud as his grandparent, was old Ben Benvoisie's grandson.

"Barbara," said the Old Madame presently, breaking through the reverie caused by their first few words, "did my eyes deceive me yesterday? Have you cut adrift? Have you made up your mind that you can do without fine dresses and silver dishes and——"

"Why, I always have," said Barbara, looking up simply.

"That is true," said Elizabeth. "And so they do not count for much. And you think you know what love is—you baby? You really think you love this sailor-lad? Tell me, how much you do love him, child?"

"As much, Madame dear," said Barbara, shyly, dimpling, glancing half askance, "perhaps as much, grandmamma, as you loved Cousin Louis."

"Say you so? Then it were enough to carry its light through life and throw it far across the dark shadows of death, my child! And you," she said, turning suddenly and severely to young Ben. "Is it for life, or for a holiday, a pleasuring, a pastime?"

He looked at her as if, in spite of the claims of parentage and her all but century of reign, he examined her right to ask. "Since Barbara promised me," said he at last, "I have felt, Old Madame, like one inside a church."

"Something in him," said Elizabeth. "Not altogether the sweetness of the senses, but the sacredness of the sacrament."

And although they were not married for twice a twelvemonth, Elizabeth considered that she had married them that morning. And the reddest bonnet-rouge among the fishermen had a thrill as if all thrones were leveled when, at old Ben Benvoisie's funeral,—in the simple procession where none rode,—after young

Ben and Barbara, they saw Hope and Old Madame walk, as became the next of kin.

And so one year and another crept into the past. And at length Old Madame fell ill.

"I am going now, Hope," she said. "I should like to see Barbara's baby before I go. But remember that there is money for my burial in the little coffer. And there is still the Dernier's wood-land to sell——"

"Do not think of such things now," said Hope. "God will take care of us in some way. He always has. We are as much a part of the universe as the rest of it."

"We are put in this world to think of such things," said Elizabeth. "We are put in this world to live in it, not to live in another. Now I am going to another. We shall see what that will be. From this I have had all it had to give. I came into it with the reverence and revenue of princes. I go out of it a beggar," she cried in a tone that tore Hope's heart. "I came into it in purple—I go out of it in rags——"

Rags. Before they laid her away with those who had made part of her career of splendor and of sorrow, they opened the little hair-coffer,—moths had eaten the grave-clothes and a mouse had made its nest in the bank-notes. And to-day nothing is left of Chaslesmarie or Champernoune—not even a name and hardly a memory; and the blood ennobled by the King of France is the common blood of the fishers of the island given once with all its serfs and vassals—the island-fishers who sell you a string of herring for a shilling.

TIRAR Y SOULT.

BY

REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

REBECCA HARDING DAVIS.

IT is not very easy for the uninitiated to estimate the amount of brainwork accomplished by those who have spent any considerable time in the practical profession of journalism. In this class we must place Mrs. Davis, and therefore we can only approximate a judgment as to the net result of a lifetime devoted to letters, much of it impersonal, and its weight and importance therefore unknown to the hungry public, whose capacity for digesting printed matter appears to be unbounded.

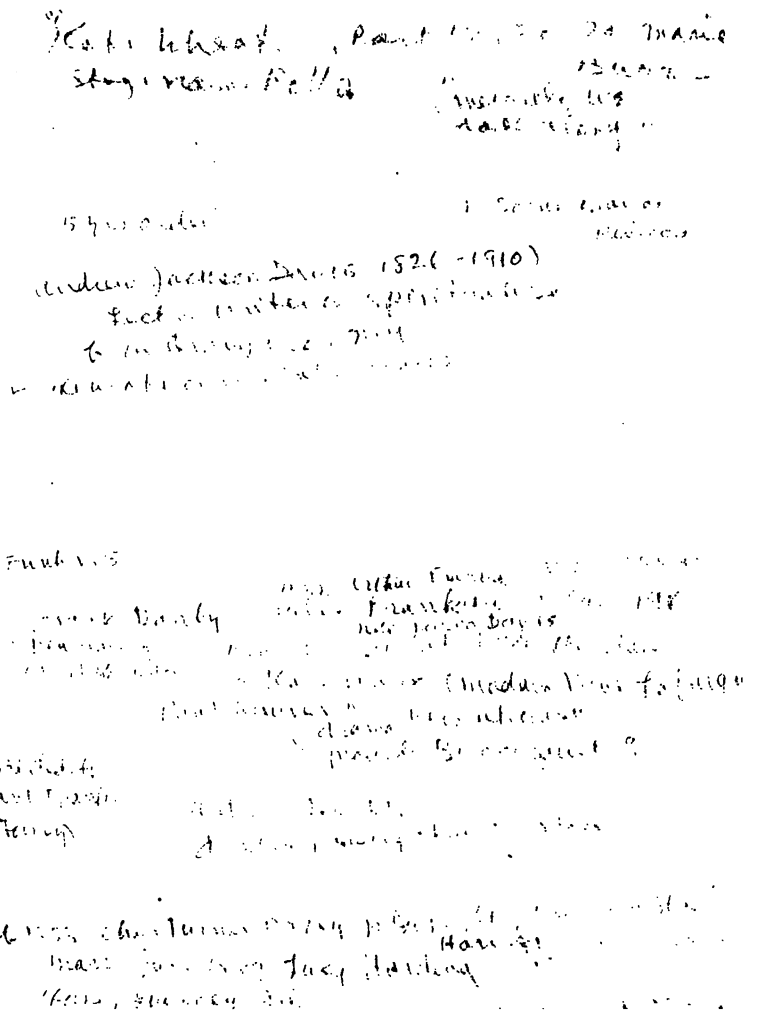
Rebecca Harding was born in Wheeling, West Virginia, June 24, 1831. Probably some of her youthful writings have escaped our research, but in 1861 appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* that interesting serial story, entitled "Life in the Iron Mills," which was subsequently published in book form; this work showed an intimate acquaintance with the class it professed to delineate, and gave fine scope to her especial talent of character analysis. This was followed in the same periodical by "A Story of To-day"; this was afterwards republished as a book under the title of "Margaret Howth," in 1862. Two years later Rebecca Harding married Mr. L. Clark Davis. He was a journalist, connected with the *Inquirer*, published in Philadelphia; he was also a contributor to several magazines. Until about 1869, Mr. and Mrs. Davis continued to make Philadelphia their home, but after this period Mrs. Davis was attached to the editorial staff of the New York Daily *Tribune*, and came to the metropolis to reside. In 1867 she had given to the world that thrilling story "Waiting for the Verdict," which was published in Philadelphia, in 1867; then followed "Dallas Galbraith," in 1868; "John Andross," in 1874. "The Captain's Story," which was published in the *Galaxy*, was founded on fact; as was

also a story entitled "The Faded Leaf of History," which was truly what it professed to be, a narrative found in an old pamphlet in the Philadelphia library.

Mrs. Davis is wonderfully gifted in the matter of discriminating mental idiosyncrasies. One of her strong characters is the smooth hypocrite, who, posing as the friend of the suffering classes, is in fact only intent on fleecing the public, through enlisting their sympathies, and collecting moneys for his ever abortive schemes of benevolence; this sort of character is not new in fiction but it has never been more finely diagnosed than by Mrs. Davis. Another skilful mind portraiture is that of the female adventuress, who appears at one time as a materializing spiritualist, and then again, creeping into society in the guise of a Russian Princess. There are moral hints and suggestions all through, without being offensively prominent; but there are two characters which are of practical interest to the lovers of psychological studies—one, the doting old father who illustrates to perfection the inane dogmatism of unreasoning affection, who, in a moribund condition, insists on seeing his daughter "comfortably settled before he goes," by compelling her, through her affection for himself, to marry a man for whom she felt nothing—if not a chronic repulsion. The other psychic study is less common; an intelligent educated man who believes himself to have inherited insanity through his mother's family:—"All the Davidges had brain disease as they approached middle age." Consequently as he approached middle age he felt the symptoms coming on him: he had conscientiously declined to marry, foreseeing his evil fate. As the symptoms grew upon him, he takes leave of all his friends and starts upon an extended tour of travel. But one was on board the steamer who had known him from infancy, and who at the last moment informs him that she whom he had always believed to be his mother, was only his step-mother, "he had no Davidge blood in his veins." His cure was instantaneous; all the dreaded symptoms disappeared. His imagination being corrected, his brain was also.

Mrs. Davis has resided of late years in Philadelphia,

The absence of a portrait of her from this book is due to the fact that she has never yet consented to have it taken. Her words in refusing it, are: "I am sorry to disappoint you, but as I do not give my photograph to my children, you cannot be offended with me."



TIRAR Y SOULT.

ROBERT KNIGHT, who was born, bred, and trained in New England, suckled on her creeds and weaned on her doubts, went directly from college to a Louisiana plantation. The change, as he felt, was extreme.

He happened to go in this way. He was a civil engineer. A company was formed among the planters in the Gulf parishes to drain their marshes in order to establish large rice-farms. James B. Eads, who knew Knight, gave his name to them as that of a promising young fellow who was quite competent to do the simple work that they required, and one, too, who would probably give more zeal and time to it than would a man whose reputation was assured.

After Mr. Knight had thoroughly examined the scene of operations, he was invited by the president of the company, M. de Fourgon, to go with him to his plantation, the Lit de Fleurs, where he would meet the directors of the company.

"The change is great and sudden," he wrote to his confidential friend Miss Cramer. "From Boston to the Bed of Flowers, from the Concord School of Philosophy to the companionship of ex-slaveholders, from Emerson to Gayarré! I expected to lose my breath mentally. I expected to find the plantation a vast exhibit of fertility, disorder, and dirt; the men, illiterate fire-eaters; the women, houris such as our fathers used to read of in Tom Moore. Instead, I find the farm, huge, it is true, but orderly; the corn-fields are laid out with the exact neatness of a Dutch garden. The works are run by skilled German workmen. The directors are shrewd and wide-awake. Madame de Fourgon is a fat, commonplace little woman. There are other women—the house swarms with guests—but not an houri among them. Till to morrow. R. K."

The conclusion was abrupt, but Knight had reached the bottom of the page of his writing-pad. He tore it off, put it in a business-envelope, and mailed it. He and Miss Cramer observed a certain manly disregard to petty conventionalities. He wrote to her on the backs of old envelopes, scraps of wrapping-paper, anything that came first to hand. She liked it. He was poor and she was poor, and they were two good fellows roughing it together. They delighted in expressing their contempt for elegant knick-knackery of any sort, in dress, literature, or religion.

"Give me the honest—the solid!" was Emma Cramer's motto, and Knight thought the sentiment very high and fine. Emma herself was a little person, with an insignificant nose, and a skin, hair, and eyes all of one yellowish tint. A certain fluffiness and piquancy of dress would have made her positively pretty. But she went about in a tightly fitting gray gown, with a white pocket-handkerchief pinned about her neck, and her hair in a small knob on top.

But, blunt as she was, she did not like the blunt ending of this letter.

What were the women like who were not houris? He might have known that she would have some curiosity about them. Had they any intellectual training whatever? She supposed they could dance and sing and embroider like those poor things in harems——

Miss Cramer lived on a farm near the village of Throop. That evening, after she had finished her work, she took the letter over to read to Mrs. Knight. There were no secrets in any letter to her from Robert which his mother could not share. They were all intimate friends together, Mrs. Knight being, perhaps, the youngest and giddiest of the three. The Knights knew how her uncle overworked the girl, for Emma was an orphan, and dependent on him. They knew all the kinds of medicine she took for her dyspepsia, and exactly how much she earned by writing book-reviews for a Boston paper. Emma, too, could tell to a dollar what Robert's yearly expenses had been at college. They had all shared in the terrible anxiety lest no position should offer for him, and rejoiced together in this opening in Louisiana.

Mrs. Knight ran to meet her. "Oh, you have had a letter, too? Here is mine!"

She read the letter with nervous nods and laughs of exultation, the butterfly-bow of yellow ribbon in her cap fluttering as if in triumph. Emma sat down on the steps of the porch with an odd, chilled feeling that she was somehow shut out from the victory.

"The 'Bed of Flowers?" What a peculiar name for a farm! And how odd it was in this Mr. de Fourgon to ask Robert to stay at his house! Do you suppose he will charge him boarding, Emma?"

"No, I think not."

"Well, Robert will save nothing by that. He must make it up somehow. I wouldn't have him under obligation to the man for his keep. I've written to him to put his salary into the Throop Savings Bank till he wants to invest it. He will have splendid chances for investment, travelling over the country—East, West, South—everywhere! House full of women? I hope he will not be falling in love in a hurry. Robert ought to marry well now."

Miss Cramer said nothing. The sun had set, and a cold twilight had settled down over the rocky fields, with their thin crops of hay. To the right was Mrs. Knight's patch, divided into tiny beds of potatoes, corn, and cabbage. As Emma's eyes fell on it she remembered how many years she had helped the widow rake and weed that field, and how they had triumphed in every shilling which they made by the garden-stuff. For Robert—all for Robert!

Now he had laid his hand on the world's neck and conquered it! North and West, and that great tropical South, with its flowers and houris—all were open to him! She looked around the circle of barren fields. He had gone out of doors, and she was shut in!

She bade his mother good-night, and went down the darkening road homeward. What a fool she was! The fact that Robert had a good salary could not change the whole order of the world in a day. Her comradeship with Knight, their plans, their sympathy—this was the order of the world which seemed eternal and solid to poor Emma.

"I am his friend," she told herself now. "If he had twenty wives, none of them could take my place."

Now Knight had not hinted at the possibility of wiving in his letter. There had never been a word or glance of love making between him and Emma; yet she saw him, quite distinctly now, at the altar, and beside him a black-eyed houri.

She entered the farm-house by the kitchen. There was the bacon, cut ready to cook for breakfast, and the clothes dampened for ironing. Up in her own bare chamber were paper and ink and two books for review —"Abstract of Greek Philosophy" and "Subdrainage."

These reviews were one way in which she had tried to interest him. Interest him! Greek philosophy! Drainage!

She threw the books on the floor, and, running to the glass, unloosened her hair and ran her fingers through it, tore the handkerchief from her neck, scanned with a breathless eagerness her pale eyes, her freckled skin, and shapeless nose, and then, burying her face in her hands, turned away into the dark.

. . . . . .

The night air that was so thin and chilly in Throop, blew over the Lit de Fleurs wet and heavy with the scents, good and bad, of the Gulf marshes. Madame de Fourgon's guests had left the supper-table, and were seated on the low gallery which ran around the house, or lounged in the hammocks that swung under the huge magnolias on the lawn. There were one or two women of undoubted beauty among them; but Robert Knight was not concerned, that night, with the good or ill-looks of any woman, either in Throop or Louisiana. He was amused by a new companion, a Monsieur Tirar, who had ridden over from a neighboring plantation. Knight at first took him for an overgrown boy; but on coming close to him, he perceived streaks of gray in the close-cut hair and beard.

Tirar had sung and acted a comic song, after dinner, at which the older men laughed as at the capers of a monkey. While they were at cards he played croquet with the children. The women sent him on errands. "José, my thimble is in the library!" "José, do see where the nurse has taken baby!" etc.

[redacted]chair had been brought out now for M. de Four- aunt, an old woman with snowy hair and delicate,

high features. José flew to bring her a shawl and wrapped it about her. She patted him on his fat cheek, telling Knight, as he capered away, how invaluable was the *cher enfant.*

"He made that Creole sauce to-day. Ah, the *petit gourmand* has many secrets of crabs and soups. He says the *chefs* in Paris confide in him, but they are original, monsieur; they are born in José's leetle brain"—tapping her own forehead.

"Ah, hear him now! 'T is the voice of a seraph!" She threw up her hands, to command silence in earth and sky; leaning back and closing her eyes, while the little man, seated with his guitar at the feet of a pretty girl, sang. Even Knight's sluggish nerves were thrilled. He had never heard such a voice as this. It wrung his heart with its dateless pain and pathos. Ashamed of his emotion, he turned to go away. But there was a breathless silence about him. The Creoles all love music, and José's voice was famous throughout the Gulf parishes. Even the negro nurses stood staring and open-mouthed.

The song ended and Tirar lounged into the house.

"Queer dog!" said M. de Fourgon. "He will not touch a guitar again perhaps for months."

"He would sing if I ask it," said the old lady. "He has reverence for the age."

M. de Fourgon, behind her, lifted his eyebrows. "José," he said, aside to Knight, "is a good fellow enough up here among the women and babies; but with his own crew, at the St. Charles, there is no more rakehelly scamp in New Orleans."

"Is he a planter?" asked the curious New Englander. Madame Dessaix's keen ears caught the question.

"Ah, the poor lad! he has no land, not an acre! His father was a Spaniard, Ruy Tirar, who married Bonaventura Soult. The Soult and Tirar plantations were immense on the Bayou Sara. José's father had his share. But crevasse—cards—the war—all gone!"—opening wide her hands. "When your government declared peace, it left our poor José at twenty with the income of a beggar."

"But that was fifteen years ago," said Knight.

"Could he not retrieve his fortune by his profession—business? What does he do?"

"Do? do?"—she turned an amazed, perplexed face from one to the other. "Does he think that José shall work? José! *Mon Dieu!*"

"Tirar," said M. de Fourgon, laughing, "is not precisely a business man, Mr. Knight. He has countless friends and kinsfolk. We are all cousins of the Tirars or Soults. He is welcome everywhere."

"Oh!" said Knight, with a significant nod. Even in his brief stay in this neighborhood, he had found other men than José living in absolute idleness in a community which was no longer wealthy. They were neither old, ill, nor incapable. It was simply not their humor to work. They were supported, and as carefully guarded as pieces of priceless porcelain. It is a lax, extravagant feature of life, as natural to Louisiana as it is impossible to Connecticut.

It irritated Knight, yet it attracted him, as any novelty does a young man. He turned away from his companions, and sauntered up and down in the twilight. To live without work on those rich, prodigal prairies, never to think of to-morrow, to give without stint, even to lazy parasites—there was something royal about that. It touched his fancy. He had known, remembered, nothing but Throop and hard work for twenty-two years.

The air had grown chilly. Inside, M. Tirar had kindled a huge fire on the hearth. He was kneeling, fanning it with the bellows, while a young girl leaned indolently against the mantel, watching the flames, and now and then motioning to José to throw on another log. The trifling action startled Knight oddly. How they wasted that wood! All through his boyhood he used to gather every twig and chip. How often he had longed to make one big, wasteful fire, as they were doing now.

The young lady was a Miss Venn, who had been civil to him. It occurted to him that she was the very embodiment of the lavish life of this place. He did not, then or afterward, consider whether she was beautiful or not. But the soft, loose masses of reddish hair, and the large, calm, blue eyes, must, he thought,

belong to a woman who was a generous spendthrift of life.

Perhaps Knight was at heart a spendthrift. At all events, he suddenly felt a strange eagerness to become better acquainted with Miss Venn. He sought her out, the next morning, among the groups under the magnolias. There could be no question that she was stupid. She had read nothing but her Bible and the stories in the newspapers, and had no opinions about either. But she confessed to ignorance of nothing, lying with the most placid, innocent smile.

"'Hamlet?' Oh, yes; I read that when it first came out. But those things slip through my mind like water through a sieve."

To Robert, whose brain had long been rasped by Emma's prickly ideas, this dulness was as a downy bed of ease. Emma was perpetually struggling after progress with every power of her brain. It never occurred to Lucretia Venn to plan what she should do to-morrow, or at any future time. In Throop, too, there was much hard prejudice between the neighbors. To be clever was to have a sharp acerbity of wit: Emma's sarcasms cut like a thong. But these people were born kind; they were friendly to all the world, while in Lucretia there was a warm affluence of nature which made her the centre of all this warm, pleasant life. The old people called her by some pet name, the dogs followed her, the children climbed into her lap. Knight with her felt like a traveller who has been long lost on a bare, cold marsh and has come into a fire-lighted room.

One afternoon he received the card of M. José Tirar y Soult, who came to call upon him formally. The little fop was dazzling in white linen, diamond solitaires blazing on his breast and wrists.

"You go to ride?" he said, as the horses were brought round. "Lucrezia, my child, you go to ride? It portends rain"—hopping to the edge of the gallery. "You will take cold!"

"There is not a cloud in the sky," said M. de Fourgon. "Come, Lucretia, mount! José always fancies you on the edge of some calamity."

"It goes to storm," persisted Tirar. "You must wear a heavier habit, my little girl."

Miss Venn laughed, ran to her own room, and changed her habit.

"What way shall you ride?" José anxiously inquired of Knight.

"To the marshes."

"It is very dangerous there, sir. There are herds of wild cattle, and slippery ground"—fuming up and down the gallery. "Well, well! Tirar himself will go I will not see the child's life in risk."

Knight was annoyed. "What relation does Monsieur Tirar hold to Miss Venn?" he asked his host apart. "He assumes the control of a father over her."

"He is her cousin. He used to nurse the child on his knee, and he does not realize that she has grown to be a woman. Oh, yes, the poor little man loves her as if she were his own child! When their grandfather, Louis Soult, died, two years ago, he left all his estate to Lucretia, and not a dollar to José. It was brutal! But José was delighted. 'A woman must have money, or she is cold in the world,' he said. 'But to shorn lambs, like me, every wind is tempered.'"

Mr. Knight was thoughtful during the first part of the ride. "I did not know," he said, presently, to young McCann, from St. Louis, a stranger like himself, "that Miss Venn was a wealthy woman."

"Oh, yes, the largest landholder in this parish, and ten thousand a year, clear, besides."

Ten thousand a year! And Emma drudging till midnight for two or three dollars a column! Poor Emma! A gush of unwonted tenderness filled his heart. The homely, faithful soul!

Ten thousand a year! Knight would have been humiliated to think that this money could change his feeling to the young woman who owned it. But it did change it. She was no longer only a dull, fascinating appeal to his imagination. She was a power; something to be regarded with respect, like a Building Association or Pacific Railway stocks. But for some unexplained reason he carefully avoided her during the ride. Miss Venn was annoyed at this desertion, and showed it as a child would do. She beckoned him again and again to look at a heron's nest, or at the water-snakes darting through the ridges of the bayou,

or at a family of chameleons who were keeping house on a prickly-pear. Finding that he did not stay at her side, she gave up her innocent wiles, at last, and rode on in silence. M. Tirar then flung himself headlong into the breach. He poured forth information about Louisiana for Knight's benefit, with his own flighty opinions tagged thereto. He told stories and laughed at them louder than anybody else, his brown eyes dancing with fun; but through all he kept a furtive watch upon Lucretia to see the effect upon her.

They had now reached the marshes which lie along the Gulf. They were covered with a thin grass, which shone bright-emerald in the hot noon. The tide soaked the earth beneath, and drove back the narrow lagoons that were creeping seaward. A herd of raw-boned cattle wandered aimlessly over the spongy surface, doubtful whether the land was water, or the water, land. They staggered as they walked, from sheer weakness; one steer fell exhausted, and as Lucretia's horse passed, it lifted its head feebly, looked at her with beseeching eyes, and dropped it again. A flock of buzzards in the distance scented their prey and began to swoop down out of the clear sky, flashes of black across the vivid green of the prairie, with low and lower dips until they alighted, quivering, on the dying beast and began to tear the flesh from its side.

José rode them down, yelling with rage. He came back jabbbering in Spanish and looking gloomily over the vast empty marsh. "I hate death anywhere, but this is wholesale murder! These wretched Cajans of the marsh raise larger herds than they can feed; they starve by the hundreds. That poor beast is dead —thanks be to God!" After a pause. "Well, well!" he cried, with a shrug, "your syndicate will soon convert this delta into solid ground, Mr. Knight; it is a noble work! Vast fortunes"—with a magniloquent sweep of his arm—"lie hidden under this mud."

"Why don't you take a share in the noble work then?" asked McCann. "That is, if it would not interfere with your other occupations?"

"Me? I have no occupations! What work should I do?" asked José, with a fillip of his pudgy fingers.

Presently he galloped up to Miss Venn's side with an anxious face.

"Lucrezia, my child, has it occurred to you that you would like me better if I were doctor, or lawyer, or something?"

She looked at him, bewildered, but said nothing.

"It has not occurred to *me*," he went on seriously. "I have three, four hundred dollars every year to buy my clothes. I have the Tirar jewelry. What more do I want? Every thing I need comes to me."

"Certainly, why not?" she answered absently, her eyes wandering in search of something across the marsh.

"Then you do not mind?" he persisted anxiously. "I wish my little girl to be pleased with old José. As for the rest of the world"—he cracked his thumb contemptuously.

Miss Venn smiled faintly. She had not even heard him. She was watching Knight, who had left the party and was riding homeward alone. José fancied there were tears in her eyes.

"Lucrezia!"

No answer.

"Lucrezia, do not worry! *I* am here."

"You! Oh, *Mon Dieu!* You are always here!" She broke forth, pettishly.

José gasped as if he had been struck, then he reined in his horse, falling back, while Mr. McCann gladly took his place.

M. Tirar, after that day, did not return to the plantation. Once he met M. de Fourgon somewhere in the parish, and with a sickly smile asked if Lucretia were in good health. "Remember Jean," he added, earnestly, riding with him a little way. "*I* am that little girl's guardian. If she ever marry, it is José who must give her away. So ridiculous in her father to make a foolish young fellow like me her guardian!"

"Not at all! No, indeed! Very proper, Tirar," said M. de Fourgon, politely, at which José's face grew still paler and more grave.

One day he appeared about noon on the gallery. His shoes were muddy, his clothes the color of a bedraggled moth.

"Ah, *mon enfant!*" cried Madame Dessaix, kindly,

from her chair in a shady corner. "What is wrong? No white costume this day, no diamonds, no laugh? What is it, José?"

"Nothing, madame," said the little man, drearily. "I grow old. I dress no more as a young man. I accommodate myself to the age—the wrinkles."

"Wrinkles? Bah! Come and sit by me. For whom is that you look?"

"But—I thought I heard Lucrezia laugh as I rode up the levee?"

Madame Dessaix nodded significantly and, putting her fingers on her lips, with all the delight that a Frenchwoman takes in lovers, led him, on tip-toe, to the end of the gallery and, drawing aside the vines, showed him Lucretia in a hammock under a gigantic pecan-tree. A mist of hanging green moss closed about her. She lay in it as a soft, white bird in a huge nest. Knight stood leaning against the trunk of the tree, looking down at her, his thin face intent and heated. He had spoken to her, but she did not answer. She smiled lazily, as she did when the children patted her on the cheek.

"*Voilà la petite!*" whispered Madame Dessaix, triumphantly. Then she glanced at M. Tirar, finding that he looked on in silence. He roused himself, with a queer noise in his throat.

"Yes, yes! Now—what does she answer him?"

"*Mère de Dieu!* What can she answer? He is young. He is a man who has his own way. He will have no answer but the one! We consider the affair finished!"

Tirar made no comment. He turned and walked quickly down to the barnyard, where the children were, and stood among them and the cows for awhile. The stable boys, used to jokes and picayunes from him, turned hand-springs and skylarked under his feet. Finding that he neither laughed nor swore at them, they began to watch him more narrowly, and noticed his shabby clothes with amazed contempt.

"Don José seek, ta-ta!." they whispered. "Don José, yo' no see mud on yo' clo'es?"

"But he stood leaning over the fence, deaf and blind to them.

His tormentors tried another point of attack.

"Don José no seek, but his mare seek. Poor Chiquita! She old horse now."

"It's a damned lie!" Tirar turned on the boy with such fury that he jumped back. "She's not old! Bring her out!"

The negroes tumbled over each other in their fright. The little white mare was led out. José patted her with trembling hands. Whatever great trouble had shaken him turned for the moment into this petty outlet.

"There is not such a horse in Attakapas!" he muttered to himself. "I am old, but she is young!" The mare whinnied with pleasure as he stroked her and mounted.

As he rode from the enclosure, a clumsy bay horse was led out of the stable. Knight came down the levee to meet it. José scanned it with fierce contempt. "Ah, the low-born beast! And its master is no otherwise! But who can tell what shall please the little girl?"

But Tirar could not shut his eyes to the fact that the figure on the heavy horse was manly and fine. The courage in his heart was at its lowest ebb.

"José is old and fat—fat. That is a young fellow—he is like a man!" His chin quivered like a hysteric woman's. The next minute he threw himself on the mare's neck.

"I have only you now, Chiquita! Nobody but you!"

She threw back her ears and skimmed across the prairie with the hoof of a deer. When he passed Knight, M. Tirar saluted him with profound courtesy.

"Funny little man," said Robert to McCann, who had joined him. "You might call him a note of exaggeration in the world. But that is a fine horse that he rides."

"Yes; a famous racer in her day, they tell me. Tirar talks of her as if she were a blood-relation. I wish we had horses of her build just now. That brute of yours sinks in the mud with every step."

"It is deeper than usual to-day. I don't understand it. We have had no rain."

They separated in a few minutes, Knight taking his way to the sea marshes.

The marshes were always silent, but there was a sin-

gular, deep stillness upon them to-day. The sun was hidden by low-hanging mists, but it turned them into tent-like veils of soft, silvery brilliance. The colors and even the scents of the marshes were oddly intensified beneath them; the air held the strong smells of the grass and roses motionless; the lagoons, usually chocolate-colored, were inky black between their fringes of yellow and purple flags; the countless circular pools of clear water seemed to have increased in number, and leaped and bubbled as if alive.

If poor Emma could but turn her eyes from the barren fields of Throop to this strange, enchanted plain!

He checked himself. What right had he to wish for Emma? Lucretia——

But Lucretia would see nothing in it but mud and weeds!

Lucretia was a dear soul; but after all, he thought with a laugh, her best qualities were those of an amiable cow. That very day he had brought himself to make love to her with as much force as his brain could put into the words, and she had listened with the amused, pleased, ox-like stare of one of these cattle when its sides were tickled by the long grass. She had given him no definite answer.

Knight ploughed his way through the spongy prairie, therefore, in a surly ill-humor, which the unusual depth of mud did not make more amiable. He was forced to ride into the bayou every few minutes to wash the clammy lumps from the legs of his horse.

Where M. Tirar went that day, he himself, when afternoon came, could not have told distinctly. He had a vague remembrance that he had stopped at one or two Acadian farm-houses for no purpose whatever. He was not a drinking man, and had tasted nothing but water all day, yet his brain was stunned and bruised, as if he was rousing from a long debauch. When he came to himself he was on the lower marshes. Chiquita had suddenly stopped, planted her legs apart like a mule, and refused to budge an inch farther. What ailed this bayou? It, too, had come to a halt, and had swollen into a stagnant black pond.

José was altogether awake now. He understood what had happened. A heavy spring tide in the gulf

had barred all outlet for the bayous, which cut through the marshes. The great river, for which they were but mouths, was always forcing its way over their banks and oozing through all the spongy soil. There was no immediate danger of his drowning; but unless he made instant escape, there was a certainty that he would be held and sucked into the vast and rapidly spreading quicksands of mud until he did drown.

If Chiquita——?

He wheeled her head to the land and called to her. She began to move with extreme caution, testing each step, now and then leaping to a hummock of solid earth. Twice she stopped and changed her course. José dismounted several times and tried to lead her. But he soon was bogged knee deep. He saw that the instinct of the horse was safer than his judgment, and at last sat quietly in the saddle. At ordinary times he would have sworn and scolded, and, perhaps, being alone, have shed tears, for José was at heart a coward and dearly loved his life.

But to-day it was low tide in the little man's heart. The bulk of life had gone from him with Lucretia. His love for her had given him dignity in his own eyes; without her he was a poor buffoon, who carried his jokes from house to house in payment for alms.

He did what he could, however, to save his life, rationally enough—threw off his heavy boots, and the Spanish saddle, to lighten the load on the mare, patted her, sang and laughed to cheer her. Once, when the outlook was desperate, he jumped off. "She shall not die!" he said, fiercely. He tried to drive her away, but she stood still, gazing at him wistfully.

"Aha!" shouted José, delighted, nodding to some invisible looker-on. "Do you see that? *She* will not forsake me! So, my darling! You and Tirar will keep together to the last." He mounted again.

Chiquita, after that, made slow but steady progress. She reached a higher plateau. Even there the pools were rapidly widening; the oozing water began to shine between the blades of grass. In less than an hour this level also would be in the sea.

But in less than an hour Chiquita would have brought him to dry ground.

José talked to her incessantly now, in Spanish, arguing as to this course or that.

"Ha! What is that?" he cried, pulling her up. "That black lump by the bayou? A man—no! A horse and man! They are sinking—held fast!"

He was silent a moment, panting with excitement. Then—"It is Knight!" he cried. "Caught like a rat in a trap! He will die—thanks be to God!"

If Knight were dead, Lucretia would be his own little girl again.

The thought was the flash of a moment. Knight's back was toward him. José, unseen, waited irresolute.

After the first murderous triumph he hoped Robert could be saved. Tirar was a coward, but at bottom he was a man—how much of a man remained to be proved. The longer he looked at the engineer, the more he hated him, with a blind, childish fury.

"But I am not murdered—I!" he said to himself, mechanically, again and again.

Chiquita pawed, impatient to be off. The water was rising about her hoofs. It sparkled now everywhere below the reeds. Death was waiting for both the men—a still, silent, certain death—the more horrible because there was no fury or darkness in it. The silvery mist still shut the world in, like the walls of a tent; the purple and yellow flags shone in the quiet light.

Chiquita could save one, and but one.

The Tirars and Soults had been men of courage and honor for generations. Their blood was quickening in his fat little body.

A thought struck him like a stab from a knife. "If Knight dies, it will break her heart. But me!" Then he cracked his thumb contemptuously. "What does she care for poor old Jose?"

We will not ask what passed in his heart during the next ten minutes.

He and his God were alone together.

He came up to Knight and tapped him on the shoulder. "Hello! What's wrong?"

"I'm bogged. This brute of a horse is sinking in the infernal mud."

"Don't jerk at him! I'll change the horses with you, if you are in a hurry to reach the plantation. Chiquita can take you more quickly than he."

"But you?—I don't understand you. What will you do?

"I am in no hurry."

"This horse will not carry you. It seems to me that the mud is growing deeper."

"I understand the horses and mud of our marshes better than you. Come, take Chiquita. Go!"

Knight alighted and mounted the mare, with a perplexed face. He had begun to think himself in actual danger, and was mortified to find that José made so light of the affair.

"Well, good-day, Monsieur Tirar!" he said. "It is very kind in you to take that confounded beast off my hands. I'll sell him to-morrow if I can." He nodded to José, and jerked the bridle sharply. "Come, get up!" he said, touching Chiquita with the whip.

José leaped at him like a cat. "Damnation! Don't dare touch her!—wrenching the whip from his hand, and raising it to strike him. "Pardon, sir," stiffening himself, "my horse will not bear a stroke. Do not speak to her and she will carry you safely. His hand rested a moment on the mare's neck. He muttered something to her in Spanish, and then turned his back that he might not see her go away.

Mr. Knight reached the upper marshes in about two hours. He caught sight of a boat going down the bayon, and recognizing M. de Fourgon and some other men from the plantation in it, rode down to meet them.

"Thank God you are safe, Knight! exclaimed M. de Fourgon. "How's that? Surely that is Chiquita you are riding! Where did you find her?"

"That queer little Mexican insisted that I should swap horses with him. My nag was bogged, and——"

The men looked at each other.

"Where did you leave him?"

"In the sea-marsh, near the mouth of this bayou. Why, what do you mean? Is he in danger? Stop!" he shouted, as they pulled away without a word. "For God's sake, let me go with you!" He left Chiquita on the bank and leaped into the boat, taking an oar.

"You do not mean that Tirar has risked his life for mine?" he said.

"It looks like it," McCann replied. "And yet I could have sworn that he disliked you, especially."

"The old Tirar blood has not perished from off the earth," said M. de Fourgon, in a low voice. "Give way! Together now! I fear we are too late."

The whole marsh was under water before they reached it. They found José's body submerged, but wedged in the crotch of a pecan-tree, into which he had climbed. It fell like a stone into the boat.

M. de Fourgon laid his ear to his heart, pressed his chest, and rose, replying by a shake of the head to their looks. He took up his oar and rowed in silence for a few minutes.

"Pull, gentlemen!" he said horsely. "The night is almost upon us. We will take him to my house."

But Knight did not believe that José was dead. He stripped him, and rubbed aud chafed the sodden body in the bottom of the boat. When they reached the house and, after hours of vain effort, even the physician gave up, Knight would not listen to him.

"He shall not die, I tell you! Why should his life be given for mine? I did not even thank him, brute that I am!"

It was but a few minutes after that, that he looked up from his rubbing, his face growing suddenly white. The doctor put his hand on Tirar's breast. "It beats!" he cried excitedly. "Stand back! Air—brandy!"

At last José opened his eyes, and his lips moved. "What is it, my dear fellow?" they all cried, crowding around him. But only Knight caught the whisper. He stood up, an amazed comprehension in his eyes.

Drawing M. de Fourgon aside, he said: "I understand now! I see why he did it!" and hurried away abruptly, in search of Miss Venn.

The next morning M. Tirar was carried out in a steamer-chair to the gallery.

He was the hero of the day. The whole household, from Madame Dessaix to the black pickaninnies, buzzed about him. Miss Venn came down the gallery, beaming, flushed, her eyes soft with tears. She motioned them all aside and sat down by him, stroking his cold hand in her warm ones.

"It is me that you want, José? Not these others? Only me?"

"If you can spare for me a little time, Lucrezia?" he said, humbly.

She did not reply for so long that he turned and looked into her face.

"A little time? *All* of the time," she whispered.

José started forward. His chilled heart had scarcely seemed to heat since he was taken from the water. Now it sent the blood hot through his body.

"What do you mean, child?" he said, sternly. "Think what you say. It is old José. Do you mean ——?"

"Yes; and I always meant it," she said quietly. "Why, there are only us left—you and me. And Chiquita," she added, laughing.

. . . . . .

A week later Mrs. Knight received a letter from Robert, with the story of his rescue. She cried over it a good deal.

"Though I don't see why he thinks it such an extraordinary thing in that little man to do!" she reflected. "Anybody would wish to save Robert, even a wild Mexican. And, why upon earth, because his life was in danger, he should have written to offer it to Emma Cramer, passes me! She hasn't a dollar."

Through the window she saw the girl crossing the fields, with quick, light steps.

"She's heard from him! She's coming to tell me. Well, I did think Robert would have married well, having his pick and choice——"

But the widow's heart had been deeply moved. "Poor Emma! She's been as faithful as a dog to Robert. If she has no money, she will save his as an heiress would not have done. Providence orders all things right," she thought, relenting. "If that girl has not put on her best white dress on a week-day! How glad she must be! I'll go and meet her, I guess. She has no mother now, to kiss her, or say God bless her, poor child!" and she hurried to the gate.

TOM FOSTER'S WIFE.

BY

EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

Eduardo Prado

EDNA DEAN PROCTOR

WAS born in Henniker, New Hampshire, her father's family having gone there from Essex County, Massachusetts. She was thoroughly educated and trained, and started out in life equipped not only with a great love of learning, but with all the accessories which made it possible for her to follow the inclinations of her mind. She was early in life a writer of poetry, but not until the civil war—which aroused the patriotic element within her—were her verses known to her countrymen. Then her thrilling national poems sounded like a bugle from the hill of Mars. The name of Edna Dean Proctor became dear to the loyal soldiery, and her appeals were read beside the camp fires as they were repeated in the New England homes and schools. No battle songs did more to sustain the sentiment of patriotism in the soldiery than those of Miss Proctor, which are found in her volume of collected poems. "The Stripes and Stars," written in April, 1861; "Compromise," inscribed to Congress, July 4, 1861; "Who's Ready?" written in July, 1862, are really national anthems. A volume of her poems was published by Hurd & Houghton in 1867. A later collection has been made and is now in course of publication. Miss Proctor never hastens the publication of anything she writes, and being so fortunately situated in life as to be independent of circumstances, she writes only when impelled by her genius; hence the world receives her best work.

Miss Proctor's mission in life is that of a poet, and she lives in the thoughts and affections of thousands who have never seen her. She is mistress of pathos, and when her poem, "Heaven, Oh Lord, I Cannot Lose" appeared, it brought a wealth of responses from all over the land. John Greenleaf Whittier pronounced

the poem, "New Hampshire," one of the grandest produced in this country, and his verdict of her poems generally was that they had greater strength and a loftier and higher order of merit than those of any American female writer. Of her poem, "Oh, Loved and Lost," he says, "How sweet, tender and lovely the poem is! All our hearts were touched by it. It is a poem full of power and pathos, yet its shadows are radiant with a holy hope. I have read it over and over with deep interest and sympathy, and have found comfort and strength in it." The gentle Quaker poet also said of her poem on "Burns," that it was so good, so true, so tender, yet so strong of thought that he hoped the bard himself, in his new life, might read it. Mr. Longfellow used many of Miss Proctor's poems in his "Poems of Places," and expressed regret that her poem "Holy Russia" had not been written in time for his book, saying, "It would have been a splendid prelude to the volume."

Mr. Longfellow greatly admired Miss Proctor's "Russian Journey," as a book of surpassing interest. The original poem which precedes each chapter stirs the heart like the sound of a trumpet. This was her second volume of prose, and it was written after a prolonged tour in Europe and a stay of many months in that country. She has occasionally written short sketches and stories, but of her prose work she is not willing to speak unreservedly because poetry is her field. Few women have enjoyed larger opportunities for self-improvement by study and travel. She has an exquisite sympathy with sorrow and suffering, and one feels a relief in turning from intensely saddening poems, as "At Home," in which the death of Charley, a wounded soldier boy, within sight of his old home in New Hampshire, is told with thrilling presentability, to use a good old word, to those happier songs in which with gentle hand she wipes away the tears from all faces. While a writer of exquisite verse, Miss Proctor is, happily, a woman of rare personality. Not tall nor quite small, she is of medium stature, deliberate and graceful in movement, and possessed of much dignity Her manners are those of a high-bred lady, and her voice, which is sweet and low, is her great charm. She is a fluent talker, but never a gay one. Her ways are

gentle and earnest, rather than merry and vivacious. A distinguished writer, describing her, spoke of her as "the lady with eyes from out the East." Their expression is always soft, and sometimes sad, and her soul is photographed in the light that shines out from her black, lustrous and full eyes.

As in her poems, so in her life; the sunshine and the clouds will sometimes pass each other, but there is such an undercurrent of love and hope in her nature that the sunshine predominates. Miss Proctor is a true poet—a woman of genius and sterling worth.

TOM FOSTER'S WIFE.

I HAD just returned from a two years stay in Europe, and was sauntering down Tremont street, in the golden September morning, when I saw my old friend, Tom Foster, get out of a horse-car a few steps in advance of me. I knew him in a moment, though we had hardly met since we were at Exeter Academy together, ten years before—room-mates and blithe companions until we parted—I to go to Harvard and he to enter his father's store, the well known house of Foster & Co., Pearl street. He was a merry, hearty, practical fellow, clear-skinned and robust as an Englishman, self-reliant and enterprising as New Hampshire birth and Boston training could make him. I always liked him; but he plunged into business and I into study, and so, without meaning it, we had almost lost sight of each other. He was an only child and his parents spent their summers at their homestead in Greenland, near Portsmouth, and their winters in Boston.

As I said, I knew him in a moment. He had grown tall and stout, but the boy was still in his face, and with a flush of early feeling I sprang forward and, caught him by the arm.

"Tom! How are you?"

He looked puzzled for a moment, and then, bursting into a laugh, he seized my hand in his strong grasp, and exclaimed: "Why, John Ralston! Is this you? Where did you come from? I'm glad to see you, my boy. Why, I haven't set my eyes on you since we made that trip to Nahant, in your Freshman year. The truth is, father was so poorly for a long time then that I had everything to see to, and felt as if the world was on my shoulders. I did hear, though, about your college honors and your going to Germany; and I've often thought of you lately and wished to see you. Why, Jack, in spite of my weight and your beard

and broad shoulders, I can't realize that ten years have gone since we were at Exeter together. We must talk over old times and new. When did you get back and what are your plans?"

"I came yesterday, and shall stay in the city, on account of a business matter, until next Tuesday. Then I am going home."

"Well, now, this is Saturday, and you can do nothing after three o'clock. Come and spend Sunday with me in the country. I want to show you my wife."

"Your wife! Are you married, Tom?"

"Married nearly a year," said he, with a smile.

"You don't look very solemn over it."

"Solemn? It's the jolliest thing I ever did in my life. Meet me at the Eastern Depot at four o'clock, and I'll tell you all about it on the way down.

We parted at the Winter street corner—he to go to his store, and I to the Parker House.

"How handsome Boston has grown," said I, glancing at the fine buildings and the Common, beautiful in the September sun.

"We think it a nice town," he replied, speaking with the moderate words and the perfect assurance of the Bostonian, to whom his city is the sum of all excellence and delight. "Remember, four o'clock." And he disappeared in the crowd.

"Tom married!" I said to myself, as I walked along. I dare say it is to his father's pretty ward, Clara Maitland, whom I saw when I spent the day there, eleven years ago. I remembered what long curls she had and how fond she seemed of him. "Yes, I dare say it's to Clara. I hope, though, she hasn't grown up into one of those delicate young ladies, good for nothing but to display the latest fashions and waltz a little and torture the piano. Better some rosy, sturdy German Gretchen than a poor doll like them. It would be a shame for Tom, with his splendid physique and vigorous brain, to be tied for life to such a woman!" And then, turning down School street, my thoughts wandered off to a blue-eyed girl I had loved for many a year—a girl who was not satisfied with the small triumphs of the croquet-ground, but who could send an arrow straight home to the mark; and climb the hills *with* me, her step light and free as the deer's in the

glade below; and hold a steady oar in our boat on the river; and swim ashore, if need should be; and then, when walk or row was over, who could sit down to a lunch of cold meat and bread and butter with an appetite as keen as a young Indian's after a day's hunt; yes, and who knew how to be efficient in the kitchen and the rarest ornament of the parlor. How impatient I was to see her, the bewitching maiden whom a prince might be proud to marry. And again I said to myself, as I went up the Parker House steps: "I do hope Tom hasn't made a fool of himself!"

Four o'clock found me at the station; and a moment later in walked Tom, carrying a basket filled with Jersey peaches. "They don't grow in Greenland," said he, tucking the paper down over the fruit. "Come this way." I followed him, and we had just seated ourselves comfortably in the cars when the train moved off.

"Now for the story, Tom," said I, as we crossed the bridge and caught the breeze cool from the sea. "But I can guess beforehand the girl you married; it was Clara Maitland."

A shadow passed over Tom's face. "Clara has been dead four years," said he. "She inherited consumption from her mother. We did everything for her—took her to Minnesota and Florida; but it was no use. She didn't live to see her eighteenth birthday."

"Poor Clara! She loved you dearly. Then I suppose you chose some Boston girl of your acquaintance?"

"Jack, you couldn't tell who Mrs. Tom Foster was if you should try from now till morning. I shall have to enlighten you." And, moving the basket to one side and settling himself in his seat, he went on: "You know I have the misfortune to be an only child. After I was twenty-one, father and mother began to talk about my marrying. I have plenty of cousins, you know, and we always had young ladies going in and out of the house; but while Clara lived she was company for me, and after she died I was full of business, and didn't trouble myself about matrimony. To tell the truth, Jack, *I didn't fancy the girls.* Perhaps I was unfortunate in my acquaintances; but they seemed

to me to be all curls and flounces and furbelows, and I would as soon have thought of marrying a fashion-plate as one of these elaborate creatures. I don't object to style; I like it. But you can see fine gowns and bonnets any day in the Washington street windows, and my ideal of a woman was one whose dress is her least attraction."

"Do you recollect father's former partner, Adam Lane? He's a clever old gentleman and a millionaire, and father has the greatest liking and respect for him. He has two daughters—one married years ago: and the other, much younger, father fixed upon as a desirable wife for me. I rather think the two families had talked it over together; at any rate, Miss Matilda came to Greenland for a long summer visit. She is an amiable girl, but so petted and spoiled that she is good for nothing—undeveloped in mind and body. She looked very gay in the evening, attired in Jordan, Marsh & Co.'s latest importations. But she was always late at breakfast; she didn't dare to ride horseback; she couldn't take a walk without stopping to rest on every stone; and once, when I asked her if she had read the account of the battle of Sedan, she looked up, in her childish way, and said, 'No, Mr. Foster. Newspapers are so tiresome.' Bless me! what should I have done with such a baby?"

"A year ago this summer I was very much confined at the store; and, when August came, instead of spending the whole month at home, I thought I would have a little change, and so I went down for a fortnight to the Cliff house, on —— Beach. It's a quiet, pleasant resort, and you'll always find from fifty to one hundred people there during the season. The landlord is a good fellow, and a distant relative of mine. I thought he looked flurried when I went in, and after a few minutes he took me one side and said:

"'Tom, you've come at an unlucky time. I had a very good cook, that I got from Boston, at twenty dollars a week; but she's a high-tempered woman. Last evening she quarrelled with her assistants, this morning the breakfast was all in confusion, and now she's packing her trunk to leave by the next train. In two or three days I can probably get another one down in

her place; but what we're to do meanwhile I don't know.'

"'But, Norton,' said I, 'isn't there some one near by or in the house who can take it?'

"'I doubt it,' he replied. 'I've half a dozen girls from the vicinity doing upstairs work—one of them from your town, the best waiter in the dining-room. But I suppose all of them would either be afraid of the responsibility or think it beneath them to turn cook; though they would have plenty of help, and, earn twenty dollars where they now get three.'

"'Who's here from Greenland?' I asked, for I knew something of almost every one in the place.

"'Mary Lyford.'

"'Mary Lyford? A black-eyed, light-footed girl, about twenty years old, with two brothers in Colorado and her father a farmer on toward Stratham?'

"'Yes, the very same.'

"'Why, she's the prettiest girl in Greenland, at least, I thought so two years ago, when I danced with her at the Thanksgiving party in the village; and I heard last fall that she took the prize at the Manchester Fair for the best loaf of bread. But why is she here?'

"'Oh, you know farmers haven't much ready money, and I suppose she wanted to earn something for herself, and to come to the Beach, like the rest of us. You say she took the premium for her bread. I believe I'll go into the dining-room and propose to give the cook's place to any one of the girls who would like it and who feels competent to take it. I must do something,' and, looking at his watch, he went out.

"'Ten minutes later he came back, clapping his hands, and exclaimed:

"'Mary Lyford says she'll try it.'

"'Hurrah for Greenland,' cried I. Isn't that plucky? By Jove! I hope she'll succeed, and I believe she will.'

"'You mustn't expect much to-day,' said Norton. 'Things are all topsy-turvy in the kitchen, and it'll take some time tc get them straightened out.'

"Just then a new arrival claimed his attention, and with a serener face he turned away.

"Dinner was poor that day, supper was little better, and, in spite of Norton's caution, I began to be afraid

that Greenland was going down. But the next morning, what a breakfast we had—juicy steaks, hot potatoes, delicious rolls and corn-bread, griddle cakes that melted in your mouth, and coffee that had lost none of its aroma in the making. Thenceforth every meal was a triumph. The guests praised the table, and hastened to their seats at the first sound of the bell. Norton was radiant with satisfaction, and I was pleased as if I had been landlord or cook myself. Several times I sent my compliments and congratulations to Mary; but she was so constantly occupied that I never had a glimpse of her till the night before I was to leave. I was dancing in the parlor, and had just led a young lady of the Matilda Lane stamp to her mamma, when I saw Mary standing with the dining-room girls on the piazza. I went out, and, shaking her cordially by the hand, told her how interested I had been in her success, and how proud I was to find a Greenland girl so accomplished. She blushed, and thanked me, and said, in a modest way, that she was very glad if we were all suited; and then Norton came up and expressed his entire gratification with what she had done. As she stood there in a white pique dress, with a scarlet bow at her throat, and her dark hair neatly arranged, she looked every inch a lady.

"'Do me the favor, Miss Lyford, said I, to dance the next cotillion with me.'

"'Ah! Mr. Foster,' she replied, looking archly at Norton, 'that is'nt expected of the help.'

"'The "help"! I said, indignantly. You are queen of the establishment, and I invite you to dance, and so does Mr. Norton.'

"'Certainly, I do,' he answered. 'Go and show the company that you are at home in the parlor as well as the kitchen.' So, smiling and blushing, she took my arm.

"'Didn't we make a sensation when we went in! Perhaps there was no fellow there with a better 'social position' (you know the phrase) than I; and I had been quite a favorite with the ladies. You should have seen them when we took our places on the floor! Some laughed, some frowned, some whispered to their neighbors; but I paid not the slightest attention to it *all, and Mary looked* so pretty, and went through the

dance with such grace and dignity, that before it was over I believe all regarded her with admiration. I didn't wait for comments, but escorted her out as if she had been the belle of Boston.'

"'Good-night, Miss Lyford,' I said, when we reached the hall. 'I am going in the morning; but I shall see you again when you get back to Greenland.'

"'Good-night, Mr. Foster,' she replied, 'I thank you for your kindness.' Then she added, laughing; 'Have you any orders for breakfast?'

"'Why, yes, I should like to remember you by a plate of such muffins as we had yesterday.'

"'You shall have them, sir,' she said, as she disappeared in the doorway. And have them I did.

"Three weeks later Mary came home to Greenland, with more than a hundred dollars in her purse and a fame that was worth thousands. I went to see her at her father's house. I found her in every way excellent and lovely; and the end was that at Christmas we were married."

"Glorious!" I exclaimed. "Give me your hand, Tom! I was afraid you had been taken in by some Matilda Lane."

"Do you think I'm a *fool?*" said he.

Then I told him of my own choice, and I was still talking when the train stopped at the Greenland station.

We soon arrived at his hospitable home. His wife was all he had pictured her; a refined, intelligent, handsome woman, who would develop and grow in attractiveness every year of her life. After a merry evening in their pleasant parlor, I went to bed, and dreamed that the millennium had come, and that all women were like my blue-eyed girl and Mrs. Tom Foster.

Fourth of July in Jonesville.

BY

MARIETTA HOLLEY.

Yours truly
Monett Holley

MARIETTA HOLLEY.

MISS HOLLEY commenced her career as a writer when in her teens, though she published nothing until 1876. When she was a young girl she was given to poetry, and wrote a great deal. She thought she should like to become a great painter; then she decided to be a poet, but finally abandoned both intentions to become "Josiah Allen's wife," and by so doing made herself famous. In the year 1876 appeared her first book, "Samantha at the Centennial," which at once pleased the popular taste and led her to follow it speedily with a second book, "My Opinions and Betsey Bobbet's," which proved equally successful. Quaint, grotesque humor and pathetic homeliness of speech are the weapons she used to make known the wrongs of her sex and the evils of the times in which we are living. In her prose works she mostly employs the speech of half-taught people, pinning to paper their ludicrous blunders, and turns ridicule against ancient wrongs, venerated because they are ancient. Every one laughs at the absurdities of "Josiah Allen's Wife," and no one forgets the crushing exposures of fraud and oppression which she makes.

Says a writer in the *Woman's Journal:* "Miss Holley has improved on the methods of Solomon's day, by robing wisdom in the garb of folly, and standing her in the market place thus disguised, so that when the multitudes flock about her and feast themselves with laughter, to those who would not otherwise harken, suddenly—

> 'Amid the market's din
> Comes the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,
> They enslave their children's children who so make compromise with sin.'

And those who come to smile remain to pray, while

those who expected a Bacchante, awe-struck, behold Minerva."

Like Dickens, she brings to her aid the very people whose sufferings she aims to relieve, and whose evil deeds she hopes to check. She is not only quaint in expression but magnetic, and her sentiments are often touchingly and pathetically strong. "Samantha never went to school much, didn't know nothin' about grammar and never could spell," but she has in her pen the power of Ithuriel's spear, whose touch revealed the beauty which existed in everything.

Miss Holley's latest prose work, "Sweet Cicely," was wrought out through her horror of intemperance and her desire to see the young of her country saved from the evils of strong drink. Her latest contribution to literature is a book of poems, which reveal strength and tenderness, but have failed to suit the popular taste because they are wanting in the grotesque humor and pathetic homeliness of style which characterizes her prose works. But they will stand the test of time, and be read when Samantha's trials at the Centennial will have been forgotten. Miss Holley is a personality of whom all gracious and generous things may be said. She is a strong, loveable woman of high ideals and innocent, beautiful life, and is destined to be a blessing to her kind as long as she lives and long beyond her day.

FOURTH OF JULY IN JONESVILLE.

A FEW days before the Fourth, Betsey Bobbet came into our house in the morning and says she,

"Have you heard the news?"

"No," says I, pretty brief, "for I was jest puttin' in the ingrediences to a six quart pan loaf of fruit cake, and on them occasions I want my mind cool and unruffled."

"Aspire Todd is goin' to deliver the oration," says she.

"Aspire Todd! Who's he?" says I, cooly.

"Josiah Allen's wife," says she, "Have you forgotten the sweet poem that thrilled us so in the Jonesville Gimlet a few weeks since?"

"I hain't been thrilled by no poem," says I, with an almost icy face pourin' in my melted butter.

"Then it must be that you have never seen it. I have it in my port money and I will read it to you," says she, not heedin' the dark froun gatherin' on my eyebrow, and she began to read:

A QUESTIONING SAIL SENT OVER THE MYSTIC SEA.

BY PROF. ASPIRE TODD.

So the majestic thunderbolt of feeling,
Out of our inner lives our unseen beings flow,
Vague dreams revealing,
Oh, is it so? Alas! or no,
How be it. Ah! how so?

Is matter going to rule the deathless mind?
What is the matter? Is it indeed so?
Oh, truths combined;
Do the Magaloi theori still tower to and fro?
How do they move? How flow?

Monstrous, æriform, phantoms sublime,
Come leer at me, and Cadmian teeth my soul gnaw,
Through chiliasms of time;
Transcendentally and remorslessly gnaw;
By what agency? Is it a law?

Perish the vacueus in huge immensities;
Hurl the broad thunderbolt of feeling free,
The vision dies;
So lulls the bellowing surf, upon the mystic sea,
Is it indeed so? Alas! Oh me.

"How this sweet poem appeals to tender hearts," says Betsey, as she concluded it.

"How it appeals to tender heads," says I, almost coldly, measurin' out my cinnamon in a big spoon.

"Josiah Allen's wife, has not your soul never sailed on that mystical sea he so sweetly depictures?"

"Not an inch," says I, firmly, "not an inch."

"Have you not never been haunted by sorrowful phantoms you would fain bury in oblivion's sea?"

"Not once," says I, "not a phantom," and says I, as I measured out my raisons and English currants, "if folks would work as I do, from mornin' till night and earn their honest bread by the sweat of their eyebrows, they wouldn't be tore so much by phantoms as they be; it is your shiftless creeters that are always bein' gored by phantoms, and havin' 'em leer at 'em," says I with my spectacles bent keenly on her. "Why don't they leer at me, Betsey Bobbet?"

"Because you are intellectually blind, you cannot see."

"I see enough," says I, "I see more'n I want to a good deal of the time." In a dignified silence, I then chopped my raisons impressively, and Betsey started for home.

The celebration was held in Josiah's sugar bush, and I meant to be on the ground in good season, for when I have jobs I dread, I am for takin' 'em by the forelock and grapplin' with 'em at once. But as I was bakin' my last plum puddin' and chicken pie, the folks begun to stream by; I hadn't no idee there could be so many folks scairt up in Jonesville. I thought to myself, I wonder if they'd flock out so to a prayer-meetin'. But they kep' a comin', all kind of folks, in all kinds of *vehicles,* from a six horse team, down to peacible

lookin' men and wimmen drawin' baby wagons, with two babies in most of 'em.

There was a stagin' built in most the middle of the grove for the leadin' men of Jonesville, and some board seats all round it for the folks to set on. As Josiah owned the ground, he was invited to set upon the stagin'.

And as I glanced up at that man every little while through the day, I thought proudly to myself, there may be nobler lookin' men there, and men that would weigh more by the steelyards, but their haint a whiter shirt bosom there than Josiah Allen's.

When I got there the seats were full. Betsey Bobbet was jest ahead of me, and says she:

"Come on, Josiah Allen's wife, let us have a seat; we can obtain one, if we push and scramble enough." As I looked upon her carryin' out her doctrine, pushin' and scramblin', I thought to myself, if I didn't know to the contrary, I never should take you for a modest dignifier and retirer. And as I beheld her breathin' hard, and her elboes wildly wavin' in the air, pushin' in between native men of Jonesville and foreigners, I again methought, I don't believe you would be so sweaty and out of breath a votin' as you be now. And as I watched her labors and efforts I continued to methink sadly, how strange! how strange! that retirin' modesty and delicacy can stand so firm in some situations, and then be so quickly overthrowed in others seemin'ly not near so hard.

Betsey finally got a seat, wedged in between a large healthy Irishman and a native constable, and she motioned for me to come on, at the same time pokin' a respectable old gentleman in front of her, with her parasol, to make him move along. Says I:

"I may as well die one way as another, as well expier a standin' up, as to tryin' to get a seat," and I quietly leaned up against a hemlock tree and composed myself for events. A man heard my words which I spoke about one-half to myself, and says he:

"Take my seat, mum."

Says I: "No, keep it."

Says he: "I am jest comin' down with a fit, I have got to leave the ground instantly."

Says I: "In them cases I will." So I sot. His

tongue seemed thick, and his breath smelt of brandy, but I make no insinuations.

About noon, Prof. Aspire Todd walked slowly on to the ground, arm in arm with the editor of the Gimlet, old Mr. Bobbet follerin' him closely behind. Countin' two eyes to a person, and the exceptions are triflin', there was seven hundred and fifty or sixty eyes aimed at him as he walked through the crowd. He was dressed in a new shinin' suit of black, his complexion was deathly, his hair was jest turned from white, and was combed straight back from his forward and hung down long, over his coat collar. He had a big moustache, about the color of his hair, only bearin' a little more on the sandy, and a couple of pale blue eyes with a pair of spectacles over 'em.

As he walked upon the stagin' behind the Editer of the Gimlet, the band struck up, "Hail to the chief, that in triumph advances.' As soon as it stopped playin' the Editer of the Gimlet come forward and said:

"Fellow citizens of Jonesville and the adjacent and surroundin' world, I have the honor and privilege of presenting to you the orator of the day, the noble and eloquent Prof. Aspire Todd, Esq."

Professor Todd came forward and made a low bow.

"Bretheren and sisters of Jonesville," says he; "Friends and patrons of Liberty, in risin' upon this aeroter, I have signified by that act, a desire and a willingness to address you. I am not here, fellow and sister citizens, to outrage your feelings by triflin' remarks. I am not here, male patrons of liberty, to lead your noble, and you female patrons, your tender footsteps into the flowery fields of useless rhetorical eloquence; I am here noble brothers and sisters of Jonesville not in a mephitical manner, and I trust not in a mentorial, but to present a few plain truths in a plain manner, for your consideration. My friends, we are in one sense but tennifolious blossoms of life; or, if you will pardon the tergiversation, we are all but mineratin' tennirosters, hovering upon an illinition of mythoplasm."

"Jes' so," cried old Bobbet, who was settin' on a bench right under the speaker's stand, with his fat red face lookin' up shinin' with pride and enthusiasm

(and the brandy he had took to honor the old Revolutionary heroes), "jes' so! so we be!"

Professor Todd looked down on him in a troubled kind of a way for a minute, and then went on:

"Noble inhabitants of Jonesville and the rural districts, we are actinolitic bein's; each of our souls, like the acalphia, radiates a circle of prismatic tentacles, showing the divine irridescent essence of which composed are they."

"Jes' so," shouted old Bobbet, louder than before. "Jes' so, so they did, I've always said so."

"And if we are content to moulder out our existence, like fibrous, veticulated, polypus, clingin' to the crustaceous courts of custom, if we cling not like soarin' prytanes to the phantoms that lower their sceptres down through the murky waves of retrogression, endeavorin' to lure us upward in the scale of progressive bein', in what degree do we differ from the accolphia?"

"Jes' so," says old Bobbet, lookin' defiantly round on the audience. "There he has got you, how can they?"

Professor Todd stopped again, looked doun on Bobbet, and put his hand to his brow in a wild kind of a way, for a minute, and then went on.

"Let us, noble brethren in the broad field of humanity, let us rise, let us prove that mind is superior to the acalphia."

"Yes, less," says old Bobbet, "less prove ourselves."

"Let us shame the actinia," said the Professor.

"Yes, jes' so!" shouted old Bobbet, "less shame him!" and in his enthusiasm he got up and hollered agin, "Less shame him."

Professor Todd stopped stone still, his face red as blood, he drinked several swallows of water, and then he whispered a few words to the Editer of the Gimlet, who immediately came forward and said:

"Although it is a scene of touchin' beauty, to see an old gentleman, and a bald-headed one, so in love with eloquence, and to give such remarkable proofs of it at his age, still as it is the request of my young friend, and I am proud to say, 'My young friend,' in regard to one gifted in so remarkable a degree, at his request

I beg to be permitted to hint, that if the bald-headed old gentleman in the linen coat can conceal his admiration, and suppress his applause, he will confer a favor on my gifted young friend, and through him indirectly to Jonesville, to America, and the great cause of humanity, throughout the length and breadth of the country."

Here he made a low bow and sot down. Professor Todd continued his piece without any more interruption, till most the last, he wanted the public of Jonesville to "droun black care in the deep waters of oblivion, mind not her mad throes of dissolvin' bein', but let the deep waters cover her black head, and march onward."

Then the old gentleman forgot himself, and sprung up and hollered—

"Yes! droun the black cat, hold her head under! What if she is mad! don't mind her screamin'! there will be cats enough left in the world! do as he tells you to! less droun her!"

Professor Todd finished in a few words, and set down lookin' gloomy and morbid.

The next speaker was a large, healthy lookin' man, who talked aginst wimmin's rights. He didn't bring up no new arguments, but talked as they all do who oppose 'em. About wimmin outragin' and destroyin' their modesty, by bein' in the same street with a man once every 'lection day. And he talked grand about how woman's weakness aroused all the shivelry and nobility of a man's nature, and how it was his dearest and most sacred privilege and happiness, to protect her from even a summer's breeze, if it dared to blow too hard on her beloved and delicate form.—Why, before he got half through, a stranger from another world who had never seen a woman, wouldn't have had the least idee that they was made of clay as man was, but would have thought they was made of some thin gauze, liable at any minute to blow away, and that man's only employment was to stand and watch 'em, for fear some zephyr would get the advantage of 'em. He called wimmin every pretty name he could think of, and says he, wavin' his hands in the air in a rapped eloquence, and beatin' his breast in the same he cried, "Shall these weak, helpless angels, these sera-

phines, these sweet, delicate, cooin' doves—whose only mission it is to sweetly coo—these rainbows, these posys vote? Never! my brethren, never will we put such hardships upon 'em."

As he sot down, he professed himself and all the rest of his sect ready to die at any time, and in any way wimmin should say, rather than they should vote, or have any other hardship. Betsey Bobbet wept aloud, she was so delighted with it. Jest as they concluded their frantic cheers over his speech, a thin, feeble lookin' woman come by where I stood, drawin' a large baby wagon with two children in it, seemingly a two-year-old, and a yearlin'. She also carried one in her arms who was lame. She looked so beat out and so ready to drop down, that I got up and gave her my seat, and says I:

"You look ready to fall down."

"Am I too late," says she, "to hear my husband's speech?"

"Is that your husband," says I, "that is laughin' and talkin' with that pretty girl?"

"Yes," said she with a sort of troubled look.

"Well, he jest finished."

She looked ready to cry, and as I took the lame child from her breakin' arms, says I——

"This is too hard for you."

"I wouldn't mind gettin' 'em on to the ground," says she, "I haint had only three miles to bring 'em; that wouldn't be much if it wasn't for the work I had to do before I come."

"What did you have to do?" says I in pityin' accents.

"Oh, I had to fix him off, brush his clothes and black his boots, and then I did up all my work, and then I had to go out and make six lengths of fence—the cattle broke into the corn yesterday, and he was busy writin' his piece, and couldn't fix it—and then I had to mend his coat," glancin' at a thick coat in the wagon. "He didn't know but he should want it to wear home. He knew he was goin' to make a great effort, and thought he should sweat some; he is dreadful easy to take eold," said she with a worried look.

"Why didn't he help you along with the children?" said I, in a indignant tone.

"Oh, he said he had to make a great exertion to-day, and he wanted to have his mind free and clear; he is one of the kind that can't have their minds trammeled."

"It would do him good to be trammeled hard!" says I, lookin' darkly at him.

"Don't speak so of him," says she beseechingly.

"Are you satisfied with his doin's?" says I, lookin' keenly at her.

"Oh yes," says she in a trustin' tone, liftin' her care-worn, weary countenance to mine, "Oh yes, you don't know how beautiful he can *talk*."

I said no more, for it is a invincible rule of my life, not to make no disturbances in families. But I gave the yearlin' pretty near a pound of candy on the spot, and the glances I cast on *him* and the pretty girl he was a-flirtin' with, was cold enough to freeze 'em both into a male and female glazier.

Lawyer Nugent now got up and said, "That whereas the speaking was foreclosed, or in other words finished, he motioned they should adjourn to the dinner table, as the fair committee had signified by a snowy signal that fluttered like a dove of promise above waves of emerald, or in plainer terms by a *towel*, that dinner was forthcoming; whereas he motioned they should adjourn *sine die* to the aforesaid table."

Old Mr. Bobbet, and the Editer of the Gimlet seconded the motion at the same time. And Shakespeare Bobbet wantin' to do somethin' in a public way, got up and motioned "that they proceed to the table on the usial road," but there wasn't any other way—only to wade the creek—that didn't seem to be necessary, but nobody took no notice of it, so it was jest as well.

The dinner was good, but there was an awful crowd round the tables, and I was glad I wore my old lawn dress, for the children was thick, and so was bread and butter, and sass of all kinds, and jell tarts. And I hain't no shirk; I jess plunged right into the heat of the battle, as you may say, waitin' on the children, and the spots on my dress skirt would have been too much for any body that couldn't count forty. To say nothin' about old Mr. Peedick steppin' through the back *breadth*, and Betsey Bobbet ketchin' holt of me and

rippin' it off the waist as much as half a yard. And then a horse started up behind the widder Tubbs, as I was bendin' down in front of her to get somethin' out of a basket, and she weighin' above 200, was precipitated onto my straw bonnet, jammin' it down almost as flat as it was before it was braided. I came off pretty well in other respects, only about two yards of the rufflin' of my black silk cape was tore by two boys who got to fightin' behind me, and bein' blind with rage tore it off, thinkin' they had got holt of each other's hair. There was a considerable number of toasts drank; I can't remember all of 'em, but among 'em was these, "The eagle of Liberty; May her quills lengthen till the proud shadow of her wings shall sweetly rest on every land."

"The Fourth of July; the star which our old four fathers tore from the ferocious mane of the howling lion of England, and set in the calm and majestic brow of E. *pluribus unnum*. May it gleam with brighter and brighter radience, till the lion shall hide his dazzled eyes, and cower like a stricken lamb at the feet of E. *pluribus*." "Dr. Bombus, our respected citizen; how he tenderly ushers us into a world of trial, and professionally and scientifically assists us out of it. May his troubles be as small as his morphine powders, and the circle of his joys as well rounded as his pills."

"The press of Jonesville, the Gimlet, and the Augur; May they perforate the crust of ignorance with a gigantic hole, through which blushing civilization can sweetly peer into futurity."

"The fair sect: first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of their countrymen. May them that love the aforesaid, flourish like a green bayberry tree, whereas may them that hate them, dwindle down as near to nothin' as the bonnets of the aforesaid." That piece of toast was Lawyer Nugent's. Prof. Aspire Todd's was the last.

"The Luminous Lamp of Progression, whose sciatherical shadows falling upon earthly matter, not promoting sciolism, or Siccity; may it illumine humanity as it tardigradely floats from matter's aquius wastes, to minds majestic and apyrous climes."

Shakespeare Bobbet then rose up, and says he:—

"Before we leave this joyous grove I have a poem

which I was requested to read to you. It is dedicated to the Goddess of Liberty, and was transposed by another female, who modestly desires her name not to be mentioned any further than the initials B. B."

He then read the follerin' spirited lines:

Before all causes East or West,
I love the Liberty cause the best,
I love its cheerful greetings;
No joys on earth can e'er be found,
Like those pure pleasures that abound,
At Jonesville Liberty meetings.

To all the world I give my hand,
My heart is with that noble band,
The Jonesville Liberty brothers;
May every land preservèd be,
Each climed that dates on Liberty—
Jonesville before all others.

The picknick never broke up till most night. I went home a little while before it broke, and if there was a beat out creeter, I was; I jest dropped my delapidated form into a rockin' chair with a red cushion and says I, "Then needn't be another word said; I will never go to another Fourth as long as my name is Josiah Allen's wife."

"You hain't patriotic enough, Semantha," says Josiah; "you don't love your country."

"What good has it done the nation to have me all tore to pieces?" says I. "Look at my dress, look at my bonnet and cape! Any one ought to be a ironclad to stand it! Look at my dishes!" says I.

"I guess the old heroes of the Revolution went through more than that," says Josiah. "Well, I hain't a old hero!" says I coolly.

"Well, you can honor 'em, can't you?"

"Honor 'em! Josiah Allen, what good has it done old Mr. Lafayette to have my new earthern pie plates smashed to bits, and a couple of tines broke off of one of my best forks? What good has it done to old Thomas Jefferson, to have my lawn dress tore off me by Betsey Bobbet? What benefit has it been to John Adams, or Isaac Putnam, to have old Peedick step through it? What honor has it been to George Washington to have my straw bonnet flatted down tight to

my head? I am sick of this talk abaut honorin', and liberty and duty, I am sick of it," says I; "Folks will make a pack-horse of duty, and ride it to circus'es and bull fights, if we had 'em. You may talk about honorin' the old heroes and goin' through all these performances to please 'em. But if they are in Heaven they can get along with heerin' the Jonesville brass band, and if they haint, they are probably where fireworks haint much of a rari'ty to 'em.

Josiah quailed before my lofty tone and I relapsed into a weary and delapidated silence.

DOROTHY.

BY

NORA PERRY.

NORA PERRY.

SOMETIME in the "seventies" there appeared in the Boston and other papers, printed, reprinted, copied one from the other, a charming, touching little poem called "After the Ball." Ever since its first appearance in its fugitive state, the name of Nora Perry has been a loved and familiar one to all persons, men or women, possessing any feeling or imagination. This poem which was some times printed under the title of "Madge and Maud" was afterwards incorporated in a book with other poems, published in Boston in 1874, but the many sweet verses that Nora Perry has written since that time, have never blotted out from the memory of her readers that lovely picture of the two maidens, who,

> "Sat and combed their beautiful hair
> After the revel was done."

Nora Perry was born in Massachusetts in 1841, but the family early removed to Providence, in Rhode Island. Her father was a merchant in good standing and repute, and his daughter received her education chiefly at home and in private schools. When about eighteen Nora commenced writing for the magazines, her first serial story being "Rosiland Newcomb," which was published in *Harpers* 1859–60. Much of her time in later years was spent in Boston, whence she wrote society letters for the Chicago *Tribune*, and also became Boston correspondent to the most influential paper in Rhode Island, the Providence *Journal*. At intervals she was in the habit of collecting her magazine contributions and issuing them in book form, dainty little volumes, such as are often classed as "summer reading." In this shape appeared in 1880 "The Tragedy of the Unexpected and Other Stories," which by the way is no tragedy at all, but a pleasant

little summer idyl. In 1881 followed a "Book of Love Stories," the very title of which endeared it to all the youthful devourers of "something new" not requiring too much thought. In 1885 we have from her pen the interesting novelette "For a Woman"; in 1886 a volume of "New Songs and Ballads"; and so late as 1887 "A Flock of Girls." In her last volume of poems, there are several of as high literary merit as that to which we have referred and which has so persistently clung in the memories of her readers—"After the Ball," but none we think which holds the sympathies so completely. Among the best may be noted "Her Lover's Friend," "Lady Wentworth," and a piece of fine imagination entitled "The Maid of Honor."

To most readers we think Nora Perry offers a refreshing peculiarity in her prose writings, that of abstaining from any obvious moral purpose in her stories; not but that such moral uses may be drawn from them by the rigid utilitarians, who are never satisfied with a book or any object merely for its pleasant interest or its beauty, if they cannot extract some wise maxim of life or practical use for it.

Nora Perry we believe has never written a line which the most super-critical prude might not approve, but it is a relief now and then to read a story, simply for the story's sake, without having its wisdom-lesson thrust upon one in every paragraph, or peeping up between the lines, compelling one to recognize the presence of a mentor, when one seeks only recreation, beauty and refreshment for the weary mind, jaded with study, or the digestion of overmuch ethics.

DOROTHY.

DOROTHY was going to her first party. She was dressed in a fine white wrought muslin, which had rather a short, scant skirt, with a little three-inch ruffle round the bottom. It had also a short waist and short, puffy sleeves, with frills of lace that fell softly against the young, girlish arms with a very pretty effect. About the waist a sash of rose-colored lute-string was tied in a great bow. The fringed ends fell almost to the hem of the three-inch ruffle, and seemed to point to the white kid slippers, with their diamond buckles, that were plainly visible beneath the short skirt.

Dorothy was ready a full half-hour before it was time to go, so that she had ample opportunity after her mother and Phœbe—the little maid—had left her, for a good many last finishing touches and final glances at herself; and you may be sure she was no more sparing of these than any other young girl of seventeen, dressed for her first party.

As she stands before the glass, giving her long mitts an extra pull, or settling the rebellious curls above her forehead, or patting the sleeve puffs carefully, she makes a very pretty picture—a pretty picture and a quaint one, for the costume is of the Revolutionary period. As I set her thus before you, you think you are regarding a young girl of to-day perhaps, decked out for some fancy dress party in this old-time dress, but Dorothy belongs to the time of her dress.

She is, or was, the daughter of Mr. Richard Merridew, of Boston, a gentleman, who, from the first, had ranged himself with those who protested against the exactions of the British crown. A gentleman of fortune, his acquaintance was largely with the aristocracy of the country, who were mostly, if not all,

Tories. Dorothy's natural associates, therefore, were the sons and daughters of these Tories.

But visiting was not a free-and-easy matter with young people of her class, as it is now; and brought up carefully at home, under private instruction, she had no opportunities for school intimacies. The company she had seen the most of up to this time had been her father's and mother's friends. Now and then they brought with them on their visits some one of the younger members of their families, and thus had sprung up an acquaintance which, while it formed an agreeable variety in Dorothy's life, was not of the intimate and confidential kind that exists between young girls of this day. Indeed, intimacies of that kind would have been thought forward and improper, and would scarcely have been permitted.

During the last year or two before Dorothy's seventeenth birthday, there had been little tea-party civilities exchanged between the young people, and if you could have looked in upon these parties, you would have seen a picture for all the world exactly like that quaint picture that Kate Greenaway has in her pretty book, "Under the Window," where Phillis and Belinda are sitting in a garden before a small tea-table; charming little maids in their straight, scant dresses and long sashes and black net mitts. But these were only mild, little-girl affairs, of the afternoon, and not a fine gathering of youths and maidens, as was this affair for which the seventeen-year-old Dorothy was prinking before the glass.

She had given, perhaps, the fortieth pinch and pat to the little tendril curls over her forehead, when her father's voice called from below,—

"Dorothy! Dorothy!" She caught up her gay silk fan, tipped splendidly with peacock eyes, flung her red merino cloak, with its caléche hood, over her arm, and went running down the stairs, her little heels click-clacking as she went.

"Here I am, father! Has Thomas brought the chaise round?" she cried, as she met her father at the door of the sitting-room.

"Oh, there's no hurry. I only wanted to see my fine bird in her new feathers, and I thought by what her mother had just been telling me, that she had been

preening and pruning these feathers quite long enough."

Dorothy blushed beneath the half-amused, half-satirical glance that her father bestowed upon her. As she crossed the floor, the autumn wind that united with the little blaze upon the hearth to make a draught, seized upon her long sash-ends and blew them out like a train.

"Ah, she's quite a bird of Paradise! or," catching sight of the peacock tips, "perhaps we might get nearer to the truth if we got nearer to the earth."

Just then, on the box-bordered garden path fronting the window, a magnificent specimen of a peacock spread its splendid court train, and at the same moment uttered the harsh, discordant cry for which it is noted.

Mr. Merridew gave a little mocking laugh. "There, my dear, you see the Prince—you named your pet rightly—applauds and welcomes you as one of its kind. You are going into the company of those who prefer just such princes, with their shows and noise; but I hope my Dorothy by this time has learned to know the truth and the right; to know that kings and princes and their followers are not always as fine as they seem outside."

Dorothy knew quite well what her father meant. She had not listened to the earnest conversations between him and his friends from time to time without gathering in their spirit, and becoming herself more or less influenced.

Mr. Merridew was an ardent believer in the rights of men, and the justice of the colonists' protest against the crown's renewed taxation. She had heard the whole discussed again and again, and again and again had been thrilled with her father's eloquent, impassioned words, as he had laid the case before some wavering neighbor. She knew that if it came to the point of sacrifice, he was willing to give his fortune and risk his life for his principles.

Only a week ago, when this invitation had come for her to attend this *fête* on the birthday of Mr. Robert Jennifer's eldest daughter, she had heard a conversation between her father and mother that had made an ineffaceable impression upon her mind; and this con-

versation was now brought forward again, as her father turned and said to his wife—

"I feel like half a traitor to my beliefs, Miriam, as I see our girl decked out like this, and on her way to those king-loving Jennifers. I didn't like it from the first. I wish I had not given my consent, for at the best it is inconsistent with my principles."

"If Dorothy were a son,—a young man,—it would be different; but she is a girl, a mere child, and I think, as I said in the beginning, that it would be very unfriendly and unneighborly to keep her from this visit," responded Mrs. Merridew.

"If Dorothy were a son, it would be different indeed. A son, I hope, would be pondering things of more moment than this gay show at this time; and instead of making a display of these fine diamonds, would be storing them away as a fund to be used at the country's need."

"Richard, I think you lay too much stress upon these trifles. Dorothy is young,—a child; she should be allowed to have a little girlish enjoyment. It chances, from our condition in life, that her acquaintance is with those that you term king-loving folks largely, like the Jennifers. We could not very well call in the people, the tradefolks, and tell her to make friends with them at a minute's warning," cried Mistress Merridew, with a little curl of her lip. She could be satirical as well as her husband.

"Well, well, let the child have her pleasure. Perhaps I am too severe a judge in these matters. But, Dorothy, don't let these king-loving folk make you disloyal to the cause of liberty and justice."

"Never fear, father," answered Dorothy, laughing brightly. "No king-loving folks could make me disloyal."

"You talk as if she were going into a company of graybeards, Richard!" exclaimed Mrs. Merridew. "As if these children would talk of such subjects on such a merry occasion! But here comes Thomas with the chaise, Dorothy. Now be a good girl, and remember when you take your cloak off to let the serving-maid see to it that your sleeve-puffs are well pulled out and your hair in neat order."

The sounds of the harp and viol proclaimed that the

dancers were in full swing when Dorothy alighted at the Jennifers' door, and a little feeling of perturbation seized her, as she discovered that, after all her expedition in dressing, she was a little late. But a cordial greeting from her hostess, and a pleasant and admiring nod here and there from one and another of the guests, soon relieved this perturbation, and very soon she found herself tripping the light, or stately, measures with the best of them.

"Children, indeed!" she thought as she looked about her. Here was young Mr. Carroll Jennifer and his brother Mark, and Mr. Robertson, and the Langton cousins, quite young gentlemen, with their lace frills and satin waistcoats, and costly chains and seals hanging therefrom. And Cynthia Jennifer, with her powdered hair and fine brocade gown, looked like a stately young woman who had seen the world.

In those days dancing was not the only amusement that young people indulged in at an evening party. Frolicsome games were greatly the fashion, and after a contra-dance, little Betty Jennifer proposed that they should play "King George's troops." This was rather childish, and there was a little prim demurring on the part of stately Miss Cynthia, but the stiff starch of grown-up manners had begun to be a good deal shaken out of these young people by this time, with the powder in their hair, and there was such a merry seconding of Betty's proposition that Miss Cynthia relented, not without secret satisfaction.

Do young people still play this game, I wonder? It is a pretty game, with its procession that passes along under the arch of two of the company's clasped and lifted hands, these two singing,—

> "Open the gates as high as the sky,
> To let King George's troops pass by."

There is a forfeit to pay by those whom the keepers of the gate succeed in catching with a sudden downward swoop of the hands as they pass under, and great amusement ensues when some captive is set to performing some droll penance or ridiculous task.

Dorothy had played the game hundreds of times, and was very expert in evading and eluding the most

wary of keepers. Her dexterity was soon apparent to the young people about her at the Jennifers, specially to Carroll Jennifer and Jervis Langton, who were the gate-keepers on this occasion. They felt a little chagrined to be thus repeatedly beaten, and at last, put on their mettle, determined to conquer before the game was over.

At length, a heedless misstep on the part of the one who preceded Dorothy brought a moment of delay, of which the gate-keepers took advantage. In an instant Dorothy had seen the misstep, and bending low, sprang forward with renewed celerity. But the sharpened wits of the gate-keepers made them more than a match for her, and swoop! there she was, caught and held fast!

There was a general shout of victory, then a general rushing forward to see this hard-won captive, and know her forfeit-fate.

"Ah ha, my little soldier!" cried Carroll Jennifer, with a gay laugh. "You see that when King George's officers stand at the gate, they stand there to win. All his troops must obey his commanding officers."

Suddenly across Dorothy's mind flashed the conversation she had heard at home, and her father's words,—

"Don't let those king-loving folk make you disloyal to the cause of liberty and justice." And she wanted to cry out,—

"I'm not one of King George's loyal troops! I'm a rebel!"

But a feeling of shyness came over her, and she thought, "How foolish for me to say a thing of that kind in the midst of a play like this!"

Somebody else, however, was not held back by this shyness, for a voice cried,—it was a girl's voice, that of Judith Myles, Dorothy's neighbor,—

"Ah! but Mistress Dorothy has been taught to flout at King George and his officers, and even though she be one of his soldiers, I dare say she is in secret a little rebel, who has been planning and plotting to escape you."

Carroll Jennifers and the Langtons had but just returned from a long visit abroad, and were not very knowing about the individual loyalty of the family

friends and acquaintances. They only felt and saw that their pretty captive was blushing with a troubled distress, and they came to her rescue, Carroll looking down with the sweetest of kind smiles on his winning face, and exclaiming,—

"Mistress Dorothy couldn't be a rebel in my father's house."

The bright color fled from Dorothy's cheeks as quickly as it had come, and she felt for the moment like a little traitor for being where she was. Then Jervis Langton took up Mr. Carroll Jennifer's words, and went on in such a glowing and eloquent fashion about keeping faith, and being true to one's old home, and the king being father of his subjects, that Dorothy was qulte bewildered.

She had never heard just this kind of young glowing talk on the other side—the king's side. The only really eloquent voice she had ever listened to, was that of her father, and he was on the people's side. As young Langton talked, he seemed to affect all those about him. It was like a spark of fire that suddenly set things into a blaze, which caught here and there, and drew out a fine fiery sort of talk that had a romantic cavalierish sound to his young listeners.

The whole mental atmosphere was entirely new to Dorothy. She was made to feel that these king-loving folk had a high, enthusiastic sense of king and country, and what they owed to both.

In the midst of all this new excitement, the pretty play and the forfeit had well-nigh been forgotten. Carroll Jennifer, suddenly glancing at Dorothy's upturned listening face, recalled both the play and his character and duty as host, and breaking in upon the talk, said smilingly,—

"But the forfeit, Mistress Dorothy, let us see to that. Ah, by the king's realm, I have it! You shall repeat after me the renunciation of all rebellious thoughts, and swear from this night forth to be loyal to the king and his crown."

Young Jennifer, as I have said, had little knowledge of the individual differences that had sprung up in Boston, and had no idea that Judith Myles' words hinted at more than a little foolish, girlish bravado. So still smiling down upon Dorothy, he began lightly,—

"Now repeat after me,—'I renounce from this night forth all seditious and rebellious thoughts against his most gracious majesty King George the Third, and swear to be his most faithful subject'—but I go too fast—I will begin again—now, 'I renounce from this night forth,'"—he paused, glancing at Dorothy with smiling invitation.

Dorothy heard again her father, saying "Don't let these king-loving folk make you disloyal to the cause of liberty and justice."

"Come, Dorothy, here is a chance for you to forswear the company of the common herd—the tinkers and trades-folk, and take your place where you belong," broke in Judirh Myles.

At these words, "tinkers and trades-folks," Dorothy recalled what her father had said one day of these tinkers and trades-folk, how high-minded and self-sacrificing and intelligent they were, and the difficulty with which they had met this redoubled taxation, and fed and clothed their families. Were these rough or boorish or grasping men?

The wax lights of the great candlelabra sent a thousand shimmering rays upon the satin waistcoats and glittering knee-buckles and jewelled seals before her.

"Come, Dorothy, Master Jennifer is waiting," said Judith.

"Come, Mistress Dorothy," Master Jennifer began again, "I renounce from this night forth."

She looked up into the kind, admiring eyes that were bent upon her, and around the splendid room at the faces that were now full of pleasant looks for her, but she must not delay longer; she must take her place where she belonged, as Judith had said. With her color deepening, her voice faltering, she repeated—"I renounce from this night forth"——

"All seditious and rebellious,"——

"All seditious and rebellious thoughts,"——

"Against his most gracious majesty King George the Third,"——

"Against——Dorothy paused, a mist passed before her eyes, a shudder of horror thrilled her, then with a sudden uplifting of her head, a sudden and new emphasis to her voice, she cried,—

"Against, *not* his most gracious majesty King

George the Third, but his sorely tried and oppressed people who are weighed down with the burden of his unjust taxes."

"Dorothy, Dorothy, how dare you under Master Jennifer's loyal roof! Are you not ashamed?" cried out Judith.

Carroll Jennifer looked from one to another with an awakening sense of the true situation.

"Mistress Dorothy," he presently exclaimed, "have these rebels and malcontents frightened you into this?"

"No—no, I have only been frightened by my own poor spirit just now, into disloyalty to the cause of liberty and justice," she replied.

"There is but one cause, and that is the crown's, and but one disloyalty, and that is to the king," cried Jervis Langton.

The clamor of voices arose on every hand. It was a storm of Tory talk; vehement protest and assertion and declaration. In the centre of it stood Dorothy. She had ceased turning red and white. With her head slightly bent, her arms drooping, and her hands clasped together, she looked like a wind-blown lily, bruised and beaten, but not overthrown.

Listening to the storm of words, she no more felt ashamed of the cause she had thus publicly espoused; she was no more bewildered and tempted by the grace and splendor of these king-loving folk. But she did not attempt to speak again, to answer these vehement assertions or offer protest for protest. She had said her say, she had made some atonement, she felt, for her first traitorous feeling of shame, and now she had nothing to do but wait for the storm to subside.

All at once Carroll Jennifer seemed to realize Dorothy's defenceless position. He could not defend her avowed principles, but she was his guest, and he was a gentleman; so he put up his hand with a "Come, come, we have had enough of this discussion to-night."

A nod to the musicians, and the strains of the harp and violin broke in upon the clamor of tongues.

At another signal, a door was flung open, and beyond, could be seen a bountifully spread supper-table, gay with lights, and the shine of silver and glass. Young Mr. Jennifer bowed low, as was the fashion of the time, before Dorothy. He was not go-

ing to treat his guest with anything but his finest manners, so bowing, he said with airy grace,—

"Will my enemy consent to let a wicked Tory serve her?"

Dorothy was not so grown up out of her childhood as she looked, and the thought that she must sit at table with those whose clamor of speech had just assailed her, was unbearable, and she shrank back with so dismayed a face that both Carroll and his sister Cynthia felt touched with pity.

"We have been making too much of this," said Cynthia in an undertone to her brother. "She's a child, after all, who has been showing off a little, and does not know the full meaning of what she has said. You see she is sorry enough for it now."

Low as this was spoken, it reached Dorothy's ears.

Perhaps if she had been older, she would have been content to let it pass, satisfied that she had defined her position sufficiently, but her sensitive conscience, still stung her for her momentary wavering, and her father's words haunted her.

She must be true to the very last, or her truth was worth nothing, she reasoned, and lifting up her head, began to speak again. Oh, how hard it was, how much harder than at first, before she knew how sharp tongues that had so late been friendly, could be.

"No, no," she cried, clearly and distinctly—for they must all hear—"I did not say what I did to show off. I spoke because I wanted to be true and honest. I was ashamed at first of—of my friends—of our cause—I was afraid to speak at first—and then, after, I was ashamed of *that*—of my cowardice. Oh! I know what I say, I know what I say, you must not take me for what I am not; I am a little rebel to the king's cause, I believe in the people's rights, and not in the crown's, and I ought not to have come here, I ought not to have come."

The clear voice faltered and fell, and the next moment poor Dorothy felt that she had disgraced herself forever before them all, as she burst into a flood of uncontrollable tears.

Then it was that a new voice was heard, a deeper, voice. It was low-toned, yet very distinct, and

there was an odd thrill, a sort of quiver of emotion to it, as it said,—

"Come, Mistress Dorothy, rebel or no rebel, you have shown a courage that we may all doff our hats to. I only hope that every king's soldier may prove his truth and loyalty to the king's cause as bravely, if he should be beset by temptation. And you, my fine young Tories," turning to the young men of the company, "I hope that you will always be able to give your meed of admiration and respect to such kind of courage, wherever you find it. Come, Mistress Dorothy, let us go and be served with some of these dainties that are prepared for us; and we will see if a Tory syllabub will not take away the taste of those tears," smilingly benignly down upon her.

"You are a little rebel and mine enemy, for I am one of the king's staunchest defenders and hope to conquer all rebels, but I am proud to have such a rebel for my guest to-night, I assure you;" and Mr. Jennifer bent down his powdered head in a fine obeisance as he offered Dorothy his arm.

THE TRIAL OF BERYL.

BY

AUGUSTA EVANS WILSON.

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THE South has furnished but few novelists among women, and when Miss Augusta Evans wrote her first story, "Beulah," she had few rivals in a field which has since been entered by a number of clever story writers.

Miss Evans is a native of Columbus, Georgia, and her first book, "Inez, a Tale of the Alamo," was written when she was still a young lady. It was published by the Harpers, but met with indifferent success. In 1859 her second book, "Beulah," was issued, and it became at once popular and continues so. It was selling well when the war broke out and which found Miss Evans at her home in Georgia. Cut off from the world of publishers, and intensely concerned for the triumph of the cause of secession, she wrote nothing more until several years later, when she published her third story "Macaria." She sent a copy of her book with a letter to her former publisher by a blockade-runner, which carried it safely to Havana, from whence it was mailed to New York. The book was printed on coarse brown paper, the copyright entered according to the *Confederate States of America*, and dedicated to the brave soldiers of the Southern Army." It had been printed in South Carolina, and was published by a bookseller in Richmond. In a letter written subsequently to her publisher she says: "The book was dedicated to our brave Southern Army, and was a great favorite in camp and hospital; and *my very heart beat in its pages*, coarse and brown though the dear old Confederate paper was. Some portions of it were scribbled in pencil, while sitting up with the sick soldiers in the hospital attached to 'Camp Beulah' near Mobile. 'Macaria' was seized and destroyed by a Federal officer in Kentucky, who burned all the

copies—Confederate edition—which crossed from rebeldom."

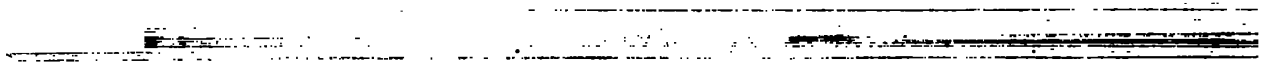
A Northern publisher who had obtained a copy through the lines, published it and at first declared that he would pay no copyright to the author because she was an arch rebel. Messrs. J. B. Lippincott and J. C. Derby, two publishers who were interested in bringing out an edition with the author's consent, expostulated with the self-elected publisher, and finally a contract was secured whereby he agreed to pay a royalty on all copies sold.

After the war closed Miss Evans travelled to New York with the copy of "St. Elmo," which was speedily published and met with great success. Towns, hotels, steamboats and plantations were named after it, and the author was recompensed with large financial returns. Her later works, "Vashti"; "Infelice"; and "At the Mercy of Tiberius" have had phenomenal success. Miss Evans, in 1868, married Mr. Wilson, a distinguished citizen of Alabama, and since that time has resided near Mobile in a home whose surroundings are suggestive of poetry and romance. It is situated on one of the many fine shell roads which radiate from that city, and stands in a lawn of majestic oaks and fragrant magnolia trees. Long, gray Southern moss hang from the wide limbs of the branches of trees, and touch the gorgeous flowers which bloom all the year round. Mocking birds sing in the leafy woods and the rarest tropical plants adorn the broad piazzas. Mrs. Wilson by her marriage and through the publication of her six novels has come into the possession of large wealth, and she devotes much time to the beautifying of her beloved home.

Mrs. Wilson has never written short stories and her pen work is performed in the most deliberate and painstaking manner. She writes for love of her work, and is happily so situated that she is not impelled by necessity to produce stories by contract. She is a woman greatly beloved by the people of the South, who are most appreciative of her genius, and her literary reputation is a national one. Gentle, earnest and deeply religious, Mrs. Wilson's manner has a tinge of sadness, at variance with her external life, which is exceptionally happy. She is likewise very domestic, de-

voted to her duties as a home-maker, and as hospitable as her own and her husband's wealth permit. She is not widely known to literary circles because she has never lived near literary centres, but she is one of the most interesting and accomplished of American writers, and has that which is a rare possession—a classical education broadened by constant application. Sensitive and retiring she is genuinely appreciative of the good-will of her fellow beings, and in a recent letter she says:—"I hold peculiarly dear the confidence and esteem of my own sex; and I deem it a nobler privilege to possess the affection of my countrywomen than to assist my countrymen in making national laws."

Mrs. Wilson is a typical Southerner in many respects, but her mentality and ability for hard and sustained study, and her creative faculty are natural gifts and are common to genius wherever found. Her personality is most lovable and winsome.



THE TRIAL OF BERYL.

STANDING before Léon Gérôme's tragic picture, and listening to the sepulchral echo that floats down the arcade of centuries, "*Ave Imperator, morituri te salutant,*" nineteenth century womanhood frowns, and deplores the brutal depravity which alone explains the presence of that white-veiled vestal band, whose snowy arms are thrust in signal over the parapet of the bloody arena; yet fair daughters of the latest civilization show unblushing flower faces among the heaving mass of the "great unwashed" who crowd our court-rooms—and listen to revolting details more repugnant to genuine modesty, than the mangled remains in the Colosseum. The rosy thumbs of Roman vestals were potent ballots in the Eternal City, and possibly were thrown only in the scale of mercy; but having no voice in verdicts, to what conservative motive may be ascribed the presence of women at criminal trials? Are the children of Culture, the heiresses of "all the ages", really more refined than the proud old dames of the era of Spartacus?

Is the spectacle of mere physical torture, in gladiatorial combats, or in the bloody precincts of *plaza de toros*, as grossly demoralizing as the loathsome minutiæ of heinous crimes upon which legal orators dilate; and which Argus reporters, with magnifying lenses at every eye, reproduce for countless newspapers, that serve as wings for transporting moral dynamite to hearthstones and nurseries all over our land? Is there a distinction, without a difference, between police gazettes and the journalistic press?

If extremes meet, and the march of human progress be along no asymtotic line, is the day very distant when we shall welcome the Renaissance of that wisdom which two thousand years ago held its august tribunal in the solemn hours of night, when darkness hid from

the Judges everything save well-authenticated facts? The supreme aim of civil and criminal law being the conservation of national and individual purity, to what shall we attribute the paradox presented in its administration, whereby its temples become lairs of libel, their moral atmosphere defiled by the monstrous vivisection of parental character by children, the slaughter of family reputation, the exhaustive analysis of every species of sin forbidden by the Decalogue, and floods of vulgar vituperation dreadful as the Apocalyptic vials? Can this generation

"—in the foremost files of time"—

afford to believe that a grim significance lurks in the desuetude of typical judicial ermine?

Traditions of *ante bellum* custom proclaimed that "good society" in the town of X——, formerly considered the precincts of courts as unfit for ladies as the fetid air of morgues, or the surgical instruments on dissecting tables; but the vanguard of cosmopolitan freedom and progress had pitched tents in the old-fashioned place, and recruited rapidly from the ranks of the invaded; hence it came to pass, that on the second day of the murder trial, when the preliminaries of jury empanelling had been completed, and all were ready to launch the case, X—— announced its social emancipation from ancient canons of decorum, by the unwonted spectacle of benches crowded with "ladies", whose silken garments were crushed against the coarser fabrics of proletariat. Despite the piercing cold of a morning late in February, the mass of human furnaces had raised the temperature to a degree that encouraged the fluttering of fans, and necessitated the order that no additional spectators should be admitted.

Viewed through the leaden haze of fearful anticipation, the horror of the impending trial had seemed unendurable to the proud and sensitive girl, whom the Sheriff placed on a seat fronting the sea of curious faces, the battery of scrutinizing eyes turned on her from the jury-box. Four months of dread had unnerved her, yet now when the cruel actuality seized her in its iron grasp, that superb strength which the inevitable lends to conscious innocence, so steeled and for-

tified her, that she felt lifted to some lonely height, where numbness eased her aching wounds.

Pallid and motionless, she sat like a statue, save for the slow strokes of her right hand upon the red gold of her mother's ring; and the sound of a man's voice reading a formula, seemed to echo from an immeasurable distance. She had consented to, had deliberately accepted the worst possible fate, and realized the isolation of her lot; but for one thing she was not prepared, and its unexpectedness threatened to shiver her calmness. Two women made their way toward her: Dyce and Sister Serena. The former sat down in the rear of the prisoner, the latter stood for a few seconds, and her thin delicate hand fell upon the girl's shoulder. At sight of the sweet, placid countenance below the floating white muslin veil, Beryl's lips quivered into a sad smile; and as they shook hands she whispered:

"I believe even the gallows will not frighten you two from my side."

Sister Serena seated herself as close as possible, drew from her pocket a gray woollen stocking, and began to knit. For an instant Beryl's eyes closed, to shut in the sudden gush of grateful tears; when she opened them, Mr. Churchill had risen:

"May it please the Court, Gentlemen of the Jury: If fidelity to duty involved no sacrifice of personal feeling, should we make it the touchstone of human character, value it as the most precious jewel in the crown of human virtues? I were less than a man, immeasurably less than a gentleman, were I capable of addressing you to-day, in obedience to the behests of justice, and in fulfilment of the stern requirements of my official position, without emotions of profound regret, that implacable Duty, to whom I have sworn allegiance, forces me to hush the pleading whispers of my pitying heart, to smother the tender instincts of human sympathy, and to listen only to the solemn mandate of those laws, which alone can secure to our race the enjoyment of life, liberty and property. An extended professional career has hitherto furnished me no parallel for the peculiarly painful exigencies of this occasion; and an awful responsibility scourges me with scorpion lash to a most unwelcome task. When man

crosses swords with man on any arena, innate pride nerves his arm and kindles enthusiasm, but alas, for the man! be he worthy the name, who draws his blade and sees before him a young, helpless, beautiful woman, disarmed. Were it not a bailable offence in the court of honor, if his arm fell palsied? Each of you who has a mother, a wife, a lily browed daughter, put yourself in my place, lend me your sympathy; and at least applaud the loyalty that strangles all individuality, and renders me bound thrall of official duty. Counsel for the defence has been repeatedly offered, nay, pressed upon the prisoner, but as often persistently rejected; hence the almost paralyzing repugnance with which I approach my theme.

"The Grand Jury of the county, at its last sitting, returned to this court a bill of indictment, charging the prisoner at the bar with the wilful, deliberate and premeditated murder of Robert Luke Darrington, by striking him with a brass andiron. To this indictment she has pleaded 'Not Guilty,' and stands before her God and this community for trial. Gentlemen of the jury, you represent this commonwealth, jealous of the inviolability of its laws, and by virtue of your oaths, you are solemnly pledged to decide upon her guilt or innocence, in strict accordance with the evidence that may be laid before you. In fulfilling this sacred duty, you will, I feel assured, be governed exclusively by a stern regard to the demands of public justice. While it taxes our reluctant credulity to believe that a crime so hideous could have been commited by a woman's hand, could have been prepetrated without provocacation within the borders of our peaceful community, nevertheless, the evidence we shall adduce must inevitably force you to the melancholy conclusion that the prisoner at the bar is guilty of the offence, with which she stands charged. The indictment which you are about to try, charges Beryl Brentano with the murder.

"In outlining the evidence which will be presented in support of this indictment, I earnestly desire that you will give me your dispassionate and undivided attention; and I call God to witness, that disclaiming personal animosity and undue zeal for vengeance, I am sorrowfully indicating as an officer of the law, a path of inquiry, that must lead you to that goal where, be-

fore the altar of Truth, Justice swings her divine scales, and bids Nemesis unsheathe her sword.

"On the afternoon of October the twenty-sixth, about three o'clock, a stranger arrived in X—— and inquired of the station agent what road would carry her to 'Elm Bluff,' the home of General Darrington; assuring him she would return in time to take the northbound train at 7.15, as urgent business necessitated her return. Demanding an interview with General Darrington, she was admitted, *incognito*, and proclaimed herself his granddaughter, sent hither by a sick mother, to procure a certain sum of money required for specified purposes. That the interview was stormy, was characterized by fierce invective on her part, and by bitter denunciation and recrimination on his, is too well established to admit of question; and they parted implacable foes, as is attested by the fact that he drove her from his room through a rear and unfrequented door, opening into a flower garden, whence she wandered over the grounds until she found the gate. The vital import of this interview lies in the great stress General Darrington placed upon the statement he iterated and reiterated that he had disinherited his daughter, and drawn up a will bequeathing his entire estate to his step-son Prince.

"Miss Brentano did not leave X—— at 7.15, though she had ample time to do so, after quitting 'Elm Bluff.' She loitered about the station house until nearly half-past eight, then disappeared. At 10 P.M. she was seen and identified by a person who had met her at 'Elm Bluff', crouching behind a tree near the road that led to that ill-fated house, and when questioned regarding her presence there, gave unsatisfactory answers. At half-past two o'clock she was next seen hastening toward the station office, along the line of the railroad, from the direction of the water tank, which is situated nearly a mile north of town. Meanwhile an unusually severe storm had been followed by a drenching rain, and the stranger's garments were wet, when, after a confused and contradictory account of her movements, she boarded the 3.05 train bound north.

"During that night, certainly after ten o'clock, General Darrington was murdered. His vault was

forced open, money was stolen, and most significant of all, the *will* was abstracted. Criminal jurisprudence holds that the absence of motive renders nugatory much weighty testimony. In this melancholy cause, could a more powerful motive be imagined than that which goaded the prisoner to dip her fair hands in her grandfather's blood, in order to possess and destroy that will which stood as an everlasting barrier between her and the estate she coveted?

"Crimes are referrible to two potent passions of the human soul; malice, engendering thirst for revenge, and the insatiable lust of money. If that old man had died a natural death, leaving the will he had signed, his property would have belonged to the adopted son, to whom he bequeathed it, and Mrs. Brentano and her daughter would have remained paupers. Cut off by assassination, and with no record of his last wishes in existence, the beloved son is bereft of his legacy, and Beryl Brentano and her mother inherit the bloodbought riches they covet. When arrested, gold coins and jewels identified as those formerly deposited in General Darrington's vault, were found in possession of the prisoner; and as if every emissary of fate were armed with warrants for her detection, a handkerchief bearing her initials, and saturated with the chloroform which she had administered to her victim, was taken from the pillow, where his honored gray head rested, when he slept his last sleep on earth. Further analysis would insult your intelligence, and having very briefly laid before you the intended line of testimony, I believe I have assigned a motive for this monstrous crime, which must precipitate the vengeance of the law, in a degree commensurate with its enormity. Time, opportunity, motive, when in full accord, constitute a fatal triad, and the suspicious and unexplainable conduct of the prisoner in various respects, furnishes, in connection with other circumstances of this case, the strongest presumptive evidence of her guilt. These circumstances, far beyond the realm of human volition, smelted and shaped in the rolling mills of destiny, form the tramway along which already the car of doom thunders; and when they shall have been fully proved to you, by unassailable testimony, no alternative remains [redacted] the verdict of guilty. Mournful as is the duty, and

awfully solemn the necessity that leaves the issue of life and death in your hands, remember, gentlemen, Curran's immortal words: 'A juror's oath is the adamantine chain that binds the integrity of man to the throne of eternal justice.'"

No trace of emotion was visible on the prisoner's face, except at the harsh mention of her mother's name; when a shudder was perceptible, as in one where dentist's steel pierces a sensitive nerve. In order to avoid the hundreds of eyes that stabbed her like merciless probes, her own had been raised and fixed upon a portion of the cornice in the room where a family of spiders held busy camp; but a fascination long resisted, finally drew their gaze down to a seat near the bar, and she encountered the steady, sorrowful regard of Mr. Dunbar.

Two months had elapsed since the Christmas morning on which she had rejected his floral offering, and during that weary season of waiting, she had refused to see any visitors except Dyce and Sister Serena; resolutely denying admittance to Miss Gordon. She knew that he had been absent, had searched for some testimony in New York, and now meeting his eyes, she saw a sudden change in their expression—a sparkle, a smile of encouragement, a declaration of success. He fancied he understood the shadow of dread that drifted over her face: and she realized at that instant, that of all foes, she had most to apprehend from the man who she knew loved her with an unreasoning and ineradicable fervor. How much had he discovered? She could defy the district solicitor, the judge, the jury; but only one method of silencing the battery that was ambushed in those gleaming blue eyes presented itself. To extinguish his jealousy by removing the figment of a rival, might rob him of the motive that explained his presistent pursuit of the clue she had concealed; but it would simultaneously demolish, also, the barrier that stretched between Miss Gordon's happy heart and the bitter waves of a cruel disappointment. If assured that her own affection was unpledged, would the bare form and ceremonial of honor bind his allegiance to his betrothed? Absorbed in these reflections, the prisoner became temporarily oblivious of the proceedings; and it was not until Sister Serena touched her arm, that

she saw the vast throng was watching her, waiting for some reply. The Judge repeated his question:

"Is it the desire of the prisoner to answer the presentation of the prosecution? Having refused professional defence, you now have the option of addressing the Court."

"Let the prosecution proceed."

There was no quiver in her voice, as cold, sweet and distinct it found its way to the extremity of the wide apartment; yet therein lurked no defiance. She resumed her seat, and her eyes sank, until the long black fringes veiled their depths. Unperceived, Judge Dent had found a seat behind her, and leaning forward he whispered:

"Will you permit me to speak for you?"

"Thank you—no."

"But it cuts me to the heart to see you so forsaken, so helpless."

"God is my helper; He will not forsake me."

The first witness called and sworn was Doctor Ledyard, the physician who for many years had attended General Darrington; and who testified that when summoned to examine the body of deceased, on the morning of the inquest, he had found it so rigid that at least eight hours must have elapsed since life became extinct. Had discovered no blood stains, and only two contusions, one on the right temple, where a circular black spot was conspicuous, and a bluish bruise over the region of the heart. He had visited deceased on the morning of previous day, and he then appeared much better, and almost relieved of rheumatism and pains attributable to an old wound in the right knee. The skull had not been fractured by the blow on the temple, but witness believed it had caused death; and the andiron, which he identified as the one found on the floor close to the deceased, was so unusually massive, he was positive that if hurled with any force, it would produce a fatal result.

Mr. Churchill: "Did you at that examination detect any traces of chloroform?"

"There was an odor of chloroform very perceptible when we lifted the hair to examine the skull; and on searching the room, we found a vial which had con-

tained chloroform, and was beside the pillow, where a portion had evidently leaked out."

"Could death have occured in consequence of inhaling that chloroform?"

"If so, the deceased could never have risen, and would have been found in his bed; moreover, the limbs were drawn up, and bent into a position totally inconsistent with any theory of death produced by anæsthetics; and the body was rigid as iron."

The foregoing testimony was confirmed by that of Doctor Cranmar, a resident physician, who had been summoned by the Coroner to assist Doctor Ledyard in the examination, reported formally at the inquest.

"Here, gentlemen of the jury, is the fatal weapon with which a woman's hands, supernaturally nerved in the struggle for gain, struck down, destroyed a venerable old man, an honored citizen, whose gray hairs should have shielded him from the murderous assault of a mercenary adventuress. Can she behold without a shndder, this tell-tale instrument of her monstrous crime?"

High above his head, Mr. Churchill raised the old-fashioned andiron, and involuntarily Beryl glanced at the quaint brass figure, cast in the form of a unicorn, with a heavy ball surmounting the horn.

"Abednego Darrington!"

Sullen, crestfallen and woe-begone was the demeanor of the old negro, who had been brought *vi et armis* by a constable, from the seclusion of a corner of the "Bend Plantation," where he had secreted himself, to avoid the shame of bearing testimony against his mistress' child. When placed on the witness stand, he crossed his arms over his chest, planted his right foot firmly in advance, and fixed his eyes on the leather strings that tied his shoes.

After some important preliminaries, the District Solicitor asked:

"When did you first see the prisoner, who now sits before you?"

"When she came to our house, the evening before ole Marster died."

"You admitted her to your master's presence?"

"I never tuck no sech libberties. He tole me to let her in."

"Go on. You are required to state all you saw, all you know."

Bedney drew back his right foot, advanced his left. Took out his handkerchief, wiped his face and refolded his arms.

"My Marster was a layin' on the rug before the fire-place, and his knees was all drawed up. His right arm was streched out, so—and his left hand was all doubled up. I know'd he was dead, before I teched him, for his face was set, and pinched and blue. I reckon I hollered, but I can't say, for the next thing I knowed, the horsler and the cook, and Miss Angerline, and Dyce, my ole 'oman, and Gord knows who all, was streamin' in and out and screamin'."

"What was the condition of the room?"

"The front window was up, and the blinds was flung wide open, and a cheer was upside down close to it. The red vases what stood on the fire-place mantle was smashed on the carpet, and the handi'on was close to Marster's right hand. The vault was open, and papers was strowed plentiful round on the floor under it. Then the neighburs and the Doctor, and the Crowner came runnin' in, and I sot down by the bed and cried like a chile. Pretty soon they turned us all out and hilt the inquess."

"You do not recollect any other circumstance?"

"The lamp on the table was burnin'—and ther' wan't much oil left in it. I seen Miss Angerline blow it out, after the doctor come."

"Who found the chloroform vial?"

"Don't know."

"Did you hear any name mentioned as that of the murderer?"

"Miss Angerline tole the Crowner, that ef the will was missin', General Darrington's granddaughter had stole it. They two, with some other gentleman, searched the vault, and Miss Angerline said everything was higgledy piggledy and no will there."

"You testified before the coroner?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you not give him the handkerchief you found?"

"I didn't have it then."

"When and where did you get it? Be very careful now."

For the first time Bedney raised his eyes toward the place where Dyce sat near the prisoner, and he hesitated. He took some tobacco from his vest pocket, stowed it away in the hollow of his cheek, and recrossed his arms.

"When Marster was dressed, and they carried him out to the drawing-room, Dyce was standin' cryin' by the fireplace, and I went to the bed, and put my hand under the bolster, where Marster always kep' his watch and his pistol. The watch was ther' but no pistol; and just sorter stuffed under the pillow case—was a hank'cher. I tuk the watch straight to the gentlemen in the drawin'-room, and they come back and sarched for the pistol, and we foun' it layin' in its case in the table draw'. Of all the nights in his life, ole Marster had forgot to lay his pistol handy."

"Never mind about the pistol. What became of the handkerchief?"

"When I picked it up, an injun-rubber stopper rolled out, and as ther' wan't no value in a hank'cher, I saw no harm in keepin' it—for a 'mento of ole Marster's death."

"You knew it was a lady's handkerchief."

"No, sir! I didn't know it then; and what's more, I don't know it now."

"Is not this the identical handkerchief you found?"

"Can't say. 'Dentical is a ticklish trap for a pusson on oath. It do look like it, to be shore; but two seed in an okrey pod is ezactly alike, and one is one, and t'other is t'other."

"Look at it. To the best of your knowledge and belief it is the identical handkerchief you found on General Darrington's pillow?"

"What I found had red specks sewed in the border, and this seems jest like it; but I don't sware to no dentical—'cause I means to be kereful; and I will stand to the aidge of my oath; but—Mars Alfred—don't shove me over it."

"Can't you read?"

"No, sir; I never hankered after book-larnin' tomfoolery, and other freedom frauds."

"You know your A B C's?"

"No more'n a blind mule."

As the solicitor took from the table in front of the jury box, the embroidered square of cambric, and held it up by two corners, every eye in the court-room fastened upon it; and a deadly faintness seized the prisoner, whitening lips that hitherto had kept their scarlet outlines.

"Gentleman of the jury, if the murdered man could stand before you, for one instant only, his frozen finger would point to the fatal letters which destiny seems to have left as a bloody brand. Here in indelible colors are wrought 'B. B.'—Beryl Brentano. Do you wonder, gentlemen, that when this overwhelming evidence of her guilt came into my possession, compassion for a beautiful woman was strangled by supreme horror, in the contemplation of the depravity of a female monster? If these crimson letters were gaping wounds, could their bloody lips more solemnly accuse yonder blanched, shuddering, conscience-stricken woman of the sickening crime of murdering her aged, infirm grandfather, from whose veins she drew the red tide that now curdles at her heart?"

As the third day of the trial wore away, the dense crowd in the court-room became acquainted with the sensation of having been unjustly defrauded of the customary public perquisite; because the monotonous proceedings were entirely devoid of the spirited verbal duels, the microscopic hair splitting, the biting sarcasms of opposing counsel, the browbeating of witnesses, the tenacious wrangling over invisible legal points, which usually vary and spice the routine and stimulate the interest of curious spectators. When a spiritless fox disdains to double, and stands waiting for the hounds, who have only to rend it, hunters feel cheated, and deem it no chase.

To the impatient spectators, it appeared a very tame, one-sided, and anomalous trial, where like a slow stream the evidences of guilt oozed, and settled about the prisoner, who challenged the credibility of no witness, and waived all the privileges of cross-examination. Now and then, the audience criticised in whispers the "undue latitude" allowed by the Judge, to

the District Solicitor; but their "exceptions" were informal, and the prosecution received no serious or important rebuff.

Was the accused utterly callous, or paralyzed by consciousness of her crime; or biding her time for a dramatic outburst of vindicating testimony? To her sensitive nature, the ordeal of sitting day after day to be stared at by a curious and prejudiced public, was more torturing than the pangs of Marsyas; and she wondered whether a courageous Roman captive who was shorn of his eyelids, and set under the blistering sun of Africa, suffered any more keenly; but motionless, apparently impassive as a stone mask, on whose features pitiless storms beat in vain, she bore without wincing the agony of her humiliation. Very white and still, she sat hour by hour with downcast eyes, and folded hands; and those who watched most closely could detect only one change of position; now and then she raised her clasped hands, and rested her lips a moment on the locked fingers, then dropped them wearily on her lap.

Even when a juryman asked two searching questions of a witness, she showed no sign of perturbation, and avoided meeting the eyes in the jury-box, as though they belonged to basilisks. Was it only three days since the beginning of this excruciating martyrdom of soul; and how much longer could she endure silently, and keep her reason?

At times, Sister Serena's hand forsook the knitting, to lay a soft, caressing touch of encouragement and sympathy on the girl's shoulder; and Dyce's burning indignation vented itself in frequent audible grating of her strong white teeth. So passed Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, in the examination of witnesses who recapitulated all that had been elicited at the preliminary investigation; and each nook and cranny of recollection in the mind of Anthony Burk, the station agent; of Belshazzer Tatem, the lame gardener; of lean and acrid Miss Angeline, the seamstress, was illuminated by the lurid light of Mr. Churchill's adroit interrogation. Thus far, the prosecution had been conducted by the District Solicitor, with the occasional assistance of Mr. Wolverton, who, in conjunction with Mr. Dunbar, had appeared as representative of the

Darrington estate, and its legal heir, Prince; and when court adjourned on Wednesday, the belief was generally entertained that no defence was possible; and that at the last moment, the prisoner would confess her crime, and appeal to the mercy of the jury. As the deputy sheriff led his prisoner toward the rear entrance, where stood the dismal funereal black wagon in which she was brought from prison to court, Judge Dent came quickly to meet her.

"My niece, Miss Gordon, could not, of course, come into the court-room, but she is here in the library, with her aunt, and desires to see you for a moment?"

"Tell her I am grateful for her kind motives, but I wish to see no one now."

"For your own sake, consider the—ah! here is my niece."

"I hope you need no verbal assurance of my deep sympathy, and my constant prayers," said Leo, taking one passive hand between hers, and pressing it warmly.

"Miss Gordon, I am comforted by your compassion, and by your unwavering confidence in a stranger whom your townsmen hold up as a 'female monster.' Because I so profoundly realize how good you are, I am unwilling that you should identify yourself with my hopeless cause. My sufferings will soon be over, and then I want no shadowy reflex cast upon the smiling blue sky of your future. I have nothing more to lose, save the burden of a life—that I shall be glad to lay down; but you—! Be careful, do not jeopardize your beautiful dream of happiness."

"Why do you persist in rejecting the overtures of those who could assist, who might successfully defend you? I beg of you, consent to receive and confer with counsel, even to-night."

"You will never understand why I must not, till the earth gives up her dead. You tremble, because only one more link can be added to the chain that is coiling about my neck, and that link is the testimony of the man whose name you expect to bear. Miss Gordon"—she stooped closer, and whispered slowly: "Do not upbraid your lover; be tender, cling to him; and afford me the consolation of know-

ing that the unfortunate woman you befriended, and trusted, cast not even a fleeting shadow between your heart and his. Pray for me, that I may be patient and strong. God bless you."

Turning swiftly, she hurried on to the officer, who had courteously withdrawn a few yards distant. As he opened the door of the wagon, he handed her a loosely folded sheet of paper.

"I promised to deliver your answer as soon as possible."

By aid of the red glow, burning low in the western sky, she read:

"Mr. Dunbar requests that for her own sake, Miss Brentano will grant him an interview this evening."

"My answer must necessarily be verbal. Say that I will see no one."

To the solitude and darkness of prison she fled for relief, as into some merciful sheltering arms; and not even the loving solicitude of Mrs. Singleton was permitted to penetrate her seclusion, or share her dreary vigil. Another sleepless night dragged its leaden hours to meet the dawn, bringing no rest to the desolate soul, who silently grappled with fate, while every womanly instinct shuddered at the loathsome degradation forced upon her. Face downward on her hard, narrow cot, she recalled the terrible accusations, the opprobrious epithets, and tearless, convulsive sobs of passionate protest shook her from head to foot.

Tortured with indignation and shame, at the insults heaped upon her, yet sternly resolved to endure silently, these nights were veritable stations along her *Via Dolorosa;* and fortified her for the daily flagellation in front of the jury-box.

On Thursday a slow, sleeting rain enveloped the world in a gray cowl, bristling with ice needles; yet when Judge Parkman took his seat at nine o'clock, there was a perceptible increase in the living mass, packed in every available inch of space.

For the first time, Mr. Dunbar's seat between his colleagues was vacant; and Mr. Churchill and Mr. Wolverton were conversing in an animated whisper.

Clad in mourning garments, and with a long crape

veil put back from her face, the prisoner was escorted to her accustomed place; and braced by a supreme effort for the critical hour, which she felt assured was at hand, her pale set features gleamed like those of a marble statue shrouded in black.

Called to the stand, Simon Frisby testified that "he was telegraph operator, and night train despatcher for railway in X——. On October the twenty-sixth, had just gone on duty at 8 P.M. at the station, when prisoner came in, and sent a telegram to New York. A copy of that message had been surrendered to the District Solicitor. Witness had remained all night in his office, which adjoined the ladies' waiting-room; and his attention having been attracted by the unusual fact that it was left open and lighted, he had twice gone to the door and looked in, but saw no one. Thought the last inspection was about two o'clock, immediately after he had sent a message to the conductor on Train No. 4. Saw prisoner when she came in, a half hour later, and heard the conversation between her and Burk, the station agent. Was very positive prisoner could not have been in the ladies' waiting-room during the severe storm."

Mr. Churchill read aloud the telegram addressed to Mrs. Ignace Brentano: "Complete success required delay. All will be satisfactory. Expect me Saturday. B. B."

He commented on its ambiguous phraseology, sent the message to the jury for inspection, and resumed his chair.

"Lennox Dunbar."

Sister Serena's knitting fell from her fingers; Dyce groaned aubibly, and Judge Dent, sitting quite near, uttered a heavy sigh. The statue throbbed into life, drew herself proudly up; and with a haughty poise of the head, her grand eloquent gray eyes looked up at the witness, and for the first time during the trial bore a challenge. For fully a moment, eye met eye, soul looked into soul, with only a few feet of space dividing prisoner and witness; and as the girl scanned the dark, resolute, sternly chiselled face, cold, yet handsome as some faultless bronze god, a singular smile unbent her frozen lips, and Judge Dent and Sister

Serena wondered what the scarcely audible ejaculation meant:

"At the mercy of Tiberius!"

No faintest reflection of the fierce pain at his heart could have been discerned on that non-committal countenance; and as he turned to the jury, his swart magnetic face appeared cruelly hard, sinister.

"I first saw the prisoner at 'Elm Bluff', on the afternoon previous to General Darrington's death. When I came out of the house, she was sitting bareheaded on the front steps, fanning herself with her hat, and while I was untying my horse, she followed Bedney into the library. The blinds were open and I saw her pass the window, walking in the direction of the bedroom."

Mr. Churchill: "At that time did you suspect her relationship to your client, General Darrington?"

"I did not."

"What was the impression left upon your mind?"

"That she was a distinguished stranger, upon some important errand."

"She excited your suspicions at once?"

"Nothing had occurred to justify suspicion. My curiosity was aroused. Several hours later I was again at 'Elm Bluff,' on legal business, and found General Darrington much disturbed in consequence of an interview with the prisoner, who, he informed me, was the child of his daughter, whom he had many years previous disowned and disinherited. In referring to this interview, his words were: 'I was harsh to the girl, so harsh that she turned upon me, savage as a strong cub defending a crippled, helpless dam. Mother and daughter know now that the last card has been played; for I gave the girl distinctly to understand, that at my death Prince would inherit every iota of my estate, and that my will had been carefully written in order to cut them off without a cent.'"

"You were led to infer that General Darrington had refused her application for money?"

"There was no mention of an application for money, hence I inferred nothing."

"During that conversation, the last which General Darrington held on earth, did he not tell you he was

oppressed by an awful presentiment connected with his granddaughter?"

"His words were: 'Somehow I am unable to get rid of the strange, disagreeable presentiment that girl left behind her as a farewell legacy. She stood there at the glass door, and raised her hand: 'General Darrington, when you lie down to die, may God have more mercy on your poor soul, than you have shown to your suffering child.'

"I advised him to sleep off the disagreeable train of thought, and as I bade him good night, his last words were:

"'I shall write to Prince to come home.'"

"What do you know concerning the contents of your client's will?"

"The original will was drawn up by my father in 187–, but last May, General Darrington required me to re-write it, as he wished to increase the amount of a bequest to a certain charitable institution. The provisions of the will were, that with the exception of various specified legacies, his entire estate, real and personal, should be given to his step-son Prince; and it was carefully worded, with the avowed intention of barring all claims that might be presented by Ellice Brentano or her heirs."

"Do you recollect any allusion to jewelry?"

"One clause of the will set aside a case of sapphire stones, with the direction that whenever Prince Darrington married, they should be worn by the lady as a bridal present from him."

"Would you not deem it highly incompatible with all you know of the General's relentless character, that said sapphires and money should have been given to the prisoner?"

"My surmises would be irrelevant and valueless to the Court; and facts, indisputable facts, are all that should be required of witnesses."

"When and where did you next see the prisoner?"

Cold, crisp, carefully accentuated, his words fell like lead upon the ears of all present, whose sympathies were enlisted for the desolate woman; and as he stood, tall, graceful, with one hand thrust within his vest, the other resting easily on the back of the bench before him, his clear cut face so suggestive of metallic

medallions, gave no more hint of the smouldering flame at his heart than the glittering ice crown of Eiriksjökull betrays the fierce lava tides beating beneath its frozen crust.

"At 10 o'clock on the same night, I saw the prisoner on the road leading from town to 'Elm Bluff', and not farther than half a mile from the cedar bridge spanning the 'branch', at the foot of the hill where the iron gate stands."

"She was then going in the direction of 'Elm Bluff?'"

"She was sitting on the ground, with her head leaning against a pine tree, but she rose as I approached."

"As it was at night, is there a possibility of your having mistaken some one else for the prisoner?"

"None whatever. She wore no hat, and the moon shone full on her face."

"Did you not question her about her presence there, at such an hour?"

"I asked: 'Madam, you seem a stranger; have you lost your way?' She answered, 'No, sir.' I added: 'Pardon me, but having seen you at "Elm Bluff" this afternoon, I thought it possible you had missed the road.' She made no reply, and I rode on to town."

"She betrayed so much trepidation and embarassment, that your suspicion was at once aroused?"

"She evinced neither trepidation nor embarrassment. Her manner was haughty and repellant, as though designed to rebuke impertinence. Next morning, when informed of the peculiar circumstances attending General Darrington's death, I felt it incumbent upon me to communicate to the magistrate the facts which I have just narrated."

"An overwhelming conviction of the prisoner's guilt impelled you to demand her arrest?"

"Overwhelming conviction rarely results from merely circumstantial evidence, but a combination of accusing circumstances certainly pointed to the prisoner; and following their guidance, I am responsible for her arrest and detention for trial. To the scrutiny of the Court I have submitted every fact that influenced my action, and the estimate of their value decided by the jurymen, must either confirm the cogency of my reason-

ing, or condemn my rash fallibility. Having under oath conscientiously given all the evidence in my possession, that the prosecution would accept or desire, I now respectfully request that unless the prisoner chooses to exercise her right of cross-examination, my colleagues of the prosecution, and his Honor, will grant me a final discharge as witness."

Turning toward Beryl, Judge Parkman said:

"It is my duty again to remind you, that the cross-examination of witnesses is one of the most important methods of defence: as thereby inaccuracies of statement regarding time, place, etc., are often detected in criminal prosecutions, which otherwise might remain undiscovered. To this invaluable privilege of every defendant, I call your attention once more. Will you cross-question the witness on the stand?"

Involuntarily her eyes sought those of the witness, and despite his locked and guarded face, she read there an intimation that vaguely disquieted her. She knew that the battle with him must yet be fought.

"I waive the right."

"Then, with the consent of the prosecuting counsel, witness is discharged, subject to recall should the necessities of rebuttal demand it."

"By agreement with my colleagues, I ask for final discharge, subject to your Honor's approval."

"If in accordance with their wishes, the request is granted."

The clock on the turret struck one, the hour of adjournment, and ere recess was declared, Mr. Churchill rose.

"Having now proved by trustworthy and unquestioned witnesses a dark array of facts, which no amount of additional testimony could either strengthen, or controvert, the prosecution here rest their case before the jury for inspection; and feeling assured that only one conclusion can result, will call no other witness, unless required in rebuttal."

[redacted]ng to be alone, Beryl had shut out even Sister [redacted]d as the officer locked her into a dark ante-[redacted] adjoining the court-room, she began to pace [redacted]. One tall, narrow window, dim with inside [redacted]owed her through filmy cobwebs the gray veil

of rain falling ceaselessly outside, darkening the day that seemed a fit type of her sombre-hued life, drawing swiftly to its close, with no hope of rift in the clouds, no possibility of sunset glow even to stain its grave. Oh! to be hidden safely in mother earth—away from the gaping crowd that thirsted for her blood!—at rest in darkness and in silence; with the maddening stings of outraged innocence and womanly delicacy stilled forever. Oh! the coveted peace of lying under the sod, with only nodding daisies, whispering grasses, crystal chimes of vernal rain, solemn fugue of wintry winds between her tired, aching eyes and the fair, eternal heavens! Harrowing days and sleepless, horror-haunted nights, invincible sappers and miners, had robbed her of strength; and the uncontrollable shivering that now and then seized her, warned her that her nerves were in revolt against the unnatural strain. The end was not far distant, she must endure a little longer; but that last batttle with Mr. Dunbar? On what ground, with what weapons would he force her to fight? Kneeling in front of a wooden bench that lined one side of the room. she laid her head on the seat, covered her face with her hands, and prayed for guidance, for divine help in her hour of supreme desolation.

"God of the helpless, succor me in my need. Forbid that through weakness the sacrifice should be incomplete. Lead, sustain, fortify me with patience, that I may ransom the soul I have promised to save."

After a time, when she resumed her walk, a strange expedient presented itself. If she sent for Mr. Dunbar, exacted an oath of secrecy, and confided the truth to his keeping, would it avail to protect her secret; would it silence him? Could she stoop so low as to throw herself upon his mercy? Therein lay the nauseous lees of her cup of humiliation; yet if she drained this last black drop, would any pledge have power to seal his lips, when he saw that she must die?

The deputy sheriff unlocked the door, and she mechanically followed him.

"I wish you would drink this glass of wine. You look so exhausted, and the air in yonder is so close, it is enough to stifle a mole. This will help to brace you up."

"Thank you very much, but I could not take it. I can bear my wrongs even to the end, and that must be very near."

As he ushered her into the court-room, Judge Dent met her, took her hand, and led her to the seat where Dyce and Sister Serena awaited her return.

"My poor child, be courageous now; and remember that you have some friends here, who are praying God to help and deliver you."

"Did He deliver His own Son from the pangs of death? Pray, that I may be patient to endure."

One swift glance showed her that Mr. Dunbar, forsaking his former place beside the district attorney, was sitting very near, just in front of her. The jurymen filed slowly into their accustomed seats, and the judge, who had been resting his head on his hand, straightened himself, and put aside a book. There was an ominous hush pervading the dense crowd, and in that moment of silent expectancy, Beryl shut her eyes and communed with her God. Some mystical exaltation of soul removed her from the realm of nervous dread; and a peace, that this world neither gives nor takes away, settled upon her. Sister Serena untied and took off the crape veil and bonnet, and as she resumed her seat, Judge Parkman turned to the prisoner.

"In assuming the responsibility of your own defence you have adopted a line of policy which, however satisfactory to yourself, must, in the opinion of the public, have a tendency to invest your cause with peculiar peril; therefore I impress upon you the fact, that while the law holds you innocent, until twelve men agree that the evidence proves you guilty, the time has arrived when your cause depends upon your power to refute the charges, and disprove the alleged facts arrayed against you. The discovery and elucidation of Truth, is the supreme aim of a court of justice, and to its faithful ministers the defence of innocence is even more imperative than the conviction of guilt. The law is a Gibraltar, fortified and armed by the consummate wisdom of successive civilizations, as an impregnable refuge for innocence; and here, within its protecting bulwarks, as in the house of a friend, you are called on to plead your defence. You have heard the

charges of the prosecution; listened to the testimony of the witnesses; and having taken your cause into your own hands, you must now stand up and defend it."

She rose and walked a few steps closer to the jury, and for the first time during the trial, looked at them steadily. White as a statue of Purity, she stood for a moment, with her wealth of shining auburn hair coiled low on her shapely head, and waving in soft outlines around her broad full brow. Unnaturally calm, and wonderfully beautiful in that sublime surrender, which like a halo illumines the myth of Antigone, it was not strange that every heart thrilled, when upon the strained ears of the multitude fell the clear, sweet, indescribably mournful voice.

"When a magnolia blossom or a white camelia just fully open, is snatched by violent hands, bruised, crushed, blackened, scarred by rents, is it worth keeping? No power can undo the ruin, and since all that made it lovely—its stainless purity—is irrevocably destroyed, why preserve it? Such a pitiable wreck you have made of the young life I am bidden to stand up and defend. Have you left me anything to live for? Dragged by constables before prejudiced strangers, accused of awful crimes, denounced as a female monster, herded with convicts, can you imagine any reason why I should struggle to prolong a disgraced, hopelessly ruined existence? My shrivelled, mutilated life is in your hands, and if you decide to crush it quickly, you will save me much suffering; as when having, perhaps unintentionally, mangled some harmless insect, you mercifully turn back, grind it under your heel, and end its torture. My life is too wretched now to induce me to defend it, but there is something I hold far dearer, my reputation as an honorable Christian woman; something I deem most sacred of all—the unsullied purity of the name my father and mother bore. Because I am innocent of every charge made against me, I owe it to my dead, to lift their honored name out of the mire. I have pondered the testimony; and the awful mass of circumstances that have combined to accuse me, seems indeed so overwhelming, that as each witness came forward, I have asked myself, am I the victim of some baleful destiny,

placed in the grooves of destroying fate—foreordained from the foundations of the world to bear the burden of another's guilt? You have been told that I killed General Darrington, and stole his money and jewels, and destroyed his will, in order to possess his estate. Trustworthy witnesses have sworn to facts, which I cannot deny, and you believe these facts; and yet, while the snare tightens around my feet, and I believe you intend to condemn me, I stand here, and look you in the face—as one day we thirteen will surely stand at the final judgment—and in the name of the God I love, and fear, and trust, I call you each to witness, that I am innocent of every charge in the indictment. My hands are as unstained, my soul is as unsullied by theft or bloodshed, as your sinless babes cooing in their cradles.

"If you can clear your minds of the foul tenants thrust into them, try for a little while to forget all the monstrous crimes you have heard ascribed to me, and as you love your mothers, wives, daughters, go back with me, leaving prejudice behind, and listen dispassionately to my most melancholy story. The river of death rolls so close to my weary feet, that I speak as one on the brink of eternity; and as I hope to meet my God in peace, I shall tell you the truth. Sometimes it almost shakes our faith in God's justice, when we suffer terrible consequences, solely because we did our duty; and it seems to me bitterly hard, inscrutable, that all my misfortunes should have come upon me thick and fast, simply because I obeyed my mother. You, fathers, say to your children, 'Do this for my sake,' and lovingly they spring to accomplish your wishes; and when they are devoured by agony, and smothered by disgrace, can you sufficiently pity them, blind artificers of their own ruin?

"Four months ago I was a very poor girl, but proud and happy, because by my own work I could support my mother and myself. Her health failed rapidly, and life hung upon an operation and certain careful subsequent treatment, which it required one hundred dollars to secure. I was competing for a prize that would lift us above want, but time pressed; the doctor urged prompt action, and my mother desired me to come South, see her father, deliver a letter and beg for

assistance. As long as possible, I resisted her entreaties, because I shrank from the degradation of coming as a beggar to the man who, I knew, had disinherited and disowned his daughter.

"Finally, strangling my rebellious reluctance, I accepted the bitter task. My mother kissed me goodbye, laid her hands on my head and blessed me for acceding to her wishes: and so—following the finger of Duty—I came here to be trampled, mangled, destroyed. When I arrived, I found I could catch a train going north at 7.15, and I bought a return ticket, and told the agent I intended to take that train. I walked to 'Elm Bluff,' and after waiting a few moments was admitted to General Darrington's presence. The letter which I delivered was an appeal for one hundred dollars, and it was received with an outburst of wrath, a flood of fierce and bitter denunciation of my parents. The interview was indescribably painful but toward its close, General Darrington relented. He opened his safe or vault, and took out a square tin box. Placing it on the table, he removed some papers, and counted down into my hand, five gold coins—twenty dollars each. When I turned to leave him, he called me back, gave me the morocco case, and stated that the sapphires were very costly, and could be sold for a large amount. He added, with great bitterness, that he gave them, simply because they were painful souvenirs of a past, which he was trying to forget; and that he had intended them as a bridal gift to his son Prince's wife; but as they had been bought by my mother's mother as a present for her only child, he would send them to their original destination, for the sake of his first wife, Helena.

"I left the room by the veranda door, because he bade me do so, to avoid what he termed 'the prying of servants.' I broke some clusters of chrysanthemums blooming in the rose garden, to carry to my mother, and then I hurried away. If the wages of disobedience be death, then fate reversed the mandate, and obedience exacts my life as a forfeit. Think of it: I had ample time to reach the station before seven o'clock, and if I had gone straight on, all would have been well. I should have taken the 7.15 train, and left forever this horrible place. If I had not loitered, I

should have seen once more my mother's face, have escaped shame, despair, ruin—oh! the blessedness of what 'might have been!'

"Listen, my twelve judges, and pity the child who obeyed at all hazards. Poor though I was, I bought a small bouquet for my sick mother the day I left her, and the last thing she did was to arrange the flowers, tie them with a wisp of faded blue ribbon, and putting them in my hand, she desired me to be sure to stop at the cemetery, find her mother's grave in the Darrington lot, and lay the bunch of blossoms for her upon her mother's monument. Mother's last words were: 'Don't forget to kneel down and pray for me, at mother's grave.'"

The voice so clear, so steady hitherto, quivered, ceased; and the heavy lashes drooped to hide the tears that gathered; but it was only for a few seconds, and she resumed in the same cold, distinct tone.

"So I went on, and fate tied the last millstone around my neck. After some search I found the place, and left the bunch of flowers with a few of the chrysanthemums; then I hastened toward town, and reached the station too late; the 7.15 train had gone. Too late!—only a half hour lost, but it carried down everything that this world held for me. I used to wonder and puzzle over that passage in the Bible, 'The stars in their courses fought against Sisera!' I have solved that mystery, for the 'stars in their courses' have fought against me; heaven, earth, man, time, circumstances, coincidences, all spun the web that snared my innocent feet. When I paid for the telegram to relieve my mother's suspense, I had not sufficient money (without using the gold) to enable me to incur hotel bills; and I asked permission to remain in the waiting-room until the next train, which was due at 3.05. The room was so close and warm I walked out, and the fresh air tempted me to remain. The moon was up, full and bright, and knowing no other street, I unconsciously followed the one I had taken in the afternoon. Very soon I reached the point near the old church where the road crosses, and I turned into it, thinking that I would enjoy one more breath of the pine forest, which was so new to me. It was so oppressively hot I sat down on the pine straw, and

fanned myself with my hat. How long I remained there, I know not, for I fell asleep; and when I awoke, Mr. Dunbar rode up and asked if I had lost my way. I answered that I had not, and as soon as he galloped on, I walked back as rapidly as possible, somewhat frightened at the loneliness of my position. Already clouds were gathering, and I had been in the waiting-room, I think about an hour, when the storm broke in its fury. I had seen the telegraph operator sitting in his office, but he seemed asleep, with his head resting on the table; and during the storm I sat on the floor, in one corner of the waiting-room, and laid my head on a chair. At last, when the tempest ended, I went to sleep. During that sleep, I dreamed of my old home in Italy, of some of my dead, of my father—of gathering grapes with one I dearly loved—and suddenly some noise made me spring to my feet. I heard voices talking, and in my feverish dreamy state, there seemed a resemblance to one I knew. Only half awake, I ran out on the pavement. Whether I dreamed the whole, I cannot tell; but the conversation seemed strangely distinct; and I can never forget the words, be they real, or imaginary:

"'There ain't no train till daylight, 'cepting it be the through freight.'

"Then a different voice asked: 'When is that due?'

"'Pretty soon I reckon, it's mighty nigh time now, but it don't stop here; it goes on to the water tank, where it blows for the bridge.'

"'How far is the bridge?'

"Only a short piece down the track, after you pass the tank.'

"When I reached the street, I saw no one but the figure of an old man, I think a negro, who was walking away. He limped and carried a bundle on the end of a stick thrown over his shoulder. I was so startled and impressed by the fancied sound of a voice once familiar to me, that I walked on down the track, but could see no one. Soon the 'freight' came along; I stood aside until it passed, then returned to the station, and found the agent standing in the door. When he questioned me about my movements, I deemed him impertinent; but having nothing to conceal, stated the

facts I have just recapitulated. You have been told that I intentionally missed the train; that when seen at 10 P.M. in the pine woods, I was stealing back to my mother's old home; that I entered at midnight the bedroom where her father slept, stupefied him with chloroform, broke open his vault, robbed it of money, jewels and will; and that when General Darrington awoke and attempted to rescue his property, I deliberately killed him. You are asked to believe that I am 'the incarnate fiend' who planned and committed that horrible crime, and, alas for me! every circumstance seems like a bloodhound to bay me. My handkerchief was found, tainted with chloroform. It was my handkerchief; but how it came there, on General Darrington's bed, only God witnessed. I saw among the papers taken from the tin box and laid on the table, a large envelope marked in red ink, 'Last Will and Testament of Robert Luke Darrington'; but I never saw it afterward. I was never in that room but once; and the last and only time I ever saw General Darrington was when I passed out of the glass door, and left him standing in the middle of the room, with the tin box in his hand.

"I can call no witnesses; for it is one of the terrible fatalities of my situation that I stand alone, with none to corroborate my assertions. Strange, inexplicable coincidences drag me down; not the malice of men, but the throttling grasp of circumstances. I am the victim of some diabolical fate, which only innocent blood will appease; but though I am slaughtered for crimes I did not commit, I know, oh! I know, that *behind fate, stands God!*—the just and eternal God, whom I trust, even in this my hour of extremest peril. Alone in the world, orphaned, reviled, wrecked for all time, without a ray of hope, I, Beryl Brentano, deny every accusation brought against me in this cruel arraignment; and I call my only witness, the righteous God above us, to hear my solemn asseveration: I am innocent of this crime; and when you judicially murder me in the name of Justice, your hands will be dyed in blood that an avenging God will one day require of you. Appearances, circumstances, coincidences of time and place, each, all, conspire to hunt me into a convict's grave; but remember, my twelve

judges, remember that a hopeless, forsaken, broken-hearted woman, expecting to die at your hands, stood before you, and pleaded first and last—Not Guilty! Not Guilty!—"

A moment she paused, then raised her arms towards heaven and added, with a sudden exultant ring in her thrilling voice, and a strange rapt splendor in her uplifted eyes:

"Innocent! Innocent! Thou God knowest! Innocent of this sin, as the angels that see Thy face."

As a glassy summer sea suddenly quivers, heaves, billows under the strong steady pressure of a rising gale, so that human mass surged and broke in waves of audible emotion, when Beryl's voice ceased; for the grace and beauty of a sorrowing woman hold a spell more potent than volumes of forensic eloquence, of juridic casuistry, of rhetorical pyrotechnics, and at its touch, the latent floods of pity gushed; people sprang to their feet, and somewhere in the wide auditory a woman sobbed. *Habitués* of a celebrated *Salon des Étrangers* recall the tradition of a Hungarian nobleman who, apparently calm, nonchalant, *debonair*, gambled desperately; "while his right hand, resting easily inside the breast of his coat, clutched and lacerated his flesh till his nails dripped with blood." With emotions somewhat analogous, Mr. Dunbar sat as participant in this judicial *rouge et noir*, where the stakes were a human life, and the skeleton hand of death was already outstretched. Listening to the calm, mournful voice which alone had power to stir and thrill his pulses, he could not endure the pain of watching the exquisite face that haunted him day and night; and when he computed the chances of her conviction, a maddening perception of her danger made his brain reel.

To all of us comes a supreme hour, when realizing the adamantine limitations of human power, the "thus far, no farther" of resentless physiological, psychological and ethical statutes under which humanity lives, moves, has its being—our desperate souls break through the meshes of that pantheistic idolatry which kneels only to "Natural Laws," and spring as suppliants to Him, who made Law possible. We take

our portion of happiness and prosperity, and while it lasts we wander far, far away in the seductive land of philosophical speculation, and revel in the freedom and irresponsibility of Agnosticism; and lo! when adversity smites, and bankruptcy is upon us, we toss the husks of the "Unknowable and Unthinkable" behind us, and flee as the Prodigal who knew his father, to that God whom (in trouble) we surely know.

Certainly Lennox Dunbar was as far removed from religious tendencies as conformity to the canons of conventional morality and the habits of an honorable gentleman in good society would permit; yet to-day, in the intensity of his dread, lest the "consummate flower" of his heart's dearest hope should be laid low in the dust, he involuntarily invoked the aid of a long-forgotten God; and through his set teeth a prayer struggled up to the throne of that divine mercy, which in sunshine we do not see, but which as the soul's eternal lighthouse gleams, glows, beckons in the blackest night of human anguish. In boyhood, desiring to please his invalid and slowly dying mother, he had purchased and hung up opposite her bed, an illuminated copy of her favorite text; and now, by some subtle transmutation in the conservation of spiritual energy, each golden letter of that Bible text seemed emblazoned on the dusty wall of the court-room: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

When a stern reprimand from the Judge had quelled all audible expression of the compassionate sympathy that flowed at the prisoner's story—as the flood at Horeb responded to Moses' touch—there was a brief silence.

Mr. Dunbar rose, crossed the intervening space and stood with his hand on the back of Beryl's chair; then moved on closer to the jury box.

"May it please your Honor, and Gentlemen of the Jury: Sometimes mistakes are crimes, and he who through unpardonable rashness commits them, should not escape 'unwhipped of justice.' When a man in the discharge of that which he deemed a duty, becomes aware that unintentionally he has perpetrated a great wrong, can he parley with pride, or dally, because the haunting ghost of consistency waves him back from

the path of a humiliating reparation? Error is easy, confession galling; and stepping down from the censor's seat to share the mortification of the pillory, is at all times a peculiarly painful reverse; hence, powerful indeed must be the conviction which impels a man who prided himself on his legal astuteness, to come boldly into this sacred confessional of truth and justice, and plead for absolution from a stupendous mistake. Two years ago, I became General Darrington's attorney, and when his tragic death occurred in October last, my professional relations, as well as lifelong friendship, incited me to the prompt apprehension of the person who had murdered him. After a careful and apparently exhaustive examination of the authenticated facts, I was convinced that they pointed only in one direction; and in that belief, I demanded and procured the arrest of the prisoner. For her imprisonment, her presence here to-day, her awful peril, I hold myself responsible; and now, gentlemen of the jury, I ask you as men having hearts of flesh, and all the honorable instincts of manhood, which alone could constitute you worthy umpires in this issue of life or death, do you, can you wonder that regret sits at my ear, chanting mournful dirges, and remorse like a harpy fastens her talons in my soul, when I tell you, that I have committed a blunder so frightful, that it borders on a crime as heinous as that for which my victim stands arraigned? Wise was the spirit of a traditional statute, which decreed that the author of a false accusation should pay the penalty designed for the accused; and just indeed would be the retribution, that imposed on me the suffering I have entailed on her.

"Acknowledging the error into which undue haste betrayed me, yet confident that divine justice, to whom I have sworn allegiance, has recalled me from a false path to one that I can now tread with absolute certainty of success, I come to-day into this, her sacred temple, lay my hand on her inviolate altar, and claiming the approval of her officiating high-priest, his Honor, appeal to you, gentlemen of the jury, to give me your hearty co-operation in my effort to repair a foul wrong, by vindicating innocence.

"Professors of opthalmology in a diagnosis of optical diseases, tell us of a symptom of infirmity which they

call pseudoblepsis, or 'false sight'. Legal vision exhibits, now and then, a corresponding phase of unconscious perversion of sight, whereby objects are perceived that do not exist, and objects present become transformed, distorted; and such an instance of exaggerated metamorphopsia is presented to-day, in the perverted vision of the prosecution. In the incipiency of this case, prior to, and during the preliminary examination held in October last, I appeared in conjunction with Mr. Wolverton, as assistant counsel in the prosecution, represented by the Honorable Mr. Churchill, District Solicitor; the object of said prosecution being the conviction of the prisoner, who was held as guilty of General Darrington's death. Subsequent reflection and search necessitated an abandonment of views that could alone justify such a position; and after consultation with my colleagues I withdrew; not from the prosecution of the real criminal, to the discovery and conviction of whom I shall dedicate every energy of my nature, but from the pursuit of one most unjustly accused. Anomalous as is my attitude, the dictates of conscience, reason, heart, force me into it; and because I am the implacable prosecutor of General Darrington's murderer, *I come to plead in defence of the prisoner*, whom I hold guiltless of the crime, innocent of the charge in the indictment. In the supreme hour of her isolation, she has invoked only one witness, and may that witness the God above us, the God of justice, the God of innocence, grant me the inspiration, and nerve my arm to snatch her from peril, and triumphantly vindicate the purity of her noble heart and life."

Remembering the important evidence which he had furnished to the prosecution, only a few hours previous, when on the witness stand, people looked at one another questioningly; doubting the testimony of their own senses; and *vox populi* was not inaptly expressed by the whispered ejaculation of Bedney to Dyce.

"Judgment day must be breaking! Mars Lennox is done turned a double summersett, and lit plum over on t'other side! It's about ekal to a spavinned, ringboned, hamstrung, hobbled horse clearin' a ten-rail fence! He jumps so beautiful, I am afeered he won't stay whar he lit!"

Comprehending all that this public recantation had cost a proud man, jealous of his reputation for professional tact and skill, as well as for individual acumen, Beryl began to realize the depth and fervor of the love that prompted it; and the merciless ordeal to which he would subject her. Inflicting upon himself the smarting sting of the keenest possible humiliation, could she hope that in the attainment of his aim he would spare her? If she threw herself even now upon his mercy, would he grant to her that which he had denied hemself?

Dreading the consequences of even a moment's delay, she rose, and a hot flush crimsoned her cheeks, as she looked up at the Judge.

"Is it my privilege to decide who shall defend me? Have I now the right to accept or reject proffered aid?"

"The law grants you that privilege; secures you that right."

"Then I decline the services of the counsel who offers to plead in my defence. I wish no human voice raised in my behalf; and having made my statement in my own defence, I commit my cause to the hands of my God."

For a moment her eyes dwelt upon the lawyer's, and as she resumed her seat, she saw the spark in their blue depths leap into a flame. Advancing a few steps, his handsome face aglow, his voice rang like a bugle call:

"May it please your Honor: Anomalous conditions sanction, necessitate most anomalous procedure, where the goal sought is simple truth and justice; and since the prisoner prefers to rest her cause, I come to this bar as *Amicus Curiæ*, and appeal for permission to plead in behalf of my clients, truth, and justice, who hold me in perpetual retainment. In prosecution of the real criminal, in order to unravel the curiously knitted web, and bring the culprit to summary punishment, I ask you, gentlemen of the jury, to ponder dispassionately the theory I have now the honor to submit to your scrutiny.

"The prisoner, whom I regard as the victim of my culpable haste and deplorably distorted vision, is as innocent of General Darrington's murder as you or I;

but I charge, that while having no complicity in that awful deed, she is nevertheless perfectly aware of the name of the person who committed it. Not *particeps criminis*, neither consenting to, aiding, abetting nor even acquainted with the fact of the crime, until accused of its perpetration; yet at this moment in possession of the only clue which will enable justice to seize the murderer. Conscious of her innocence, she braves peril that would chill the blood of men, and extort almost any secret; and shall I tell you the reason? Shall I give you the key to an enigma which she knows means death?

"Gentlemen of the jury, is there any sacrifice so tremendous, any anguish so keen, any shame so dreadful, any fate so overwhelmingly terrible as to transcend the endurance, or crush the power of a woman's love? Under this invincible inspiration, when danger threatens her idol, she knows no self; disgrace, death affright her not; she extends her arms to arrest every approach, offers her own breast as a shield against darts, bullets, sword thrusts, and counts it a privilege to lay down life in defence of that idol. O! loyalty supreme, sublime, immortal! thy name is woman's love.

"All along the march of humanity, where centuries have trailed their dust, traditions gleam like monuments to attest the victory of this immemorial potency, female fidelity; and when we of the nineteenth century seek the noblest, grandest type of merely human self-abnegation, that laid down a pure and happy life, to prolong that of a beloved object, we look back to the lovely image of that fair Greek woman, who, when the parents of the man she loved refused to give their lives to save their son, summoned death to accept her as a willing victim; and deeming it a privilege, went down triumphantly into the grave. Sustained, exalted by this most powerful passion that can animate and possess a human soul, the prisoner stands a pure, voluntary, self-devoted victim; defying the terrors of the law, consenting to condemnation—surrendering to an ignominious death, in order to save the life of the man she loves.

"Grand and beautiful as is the spectacle of her calm mournful heroism, I ask you, as men capable of appreciating her noble self-immolation, can you permit the

consummation of this sacrifice? Will you, dare you, selected, appointed, dedicated by solemn oaths to administer justice, prove so recreant to your holy trust as to aid, abet, become accessories to, and responsible for the murder of the prisoner, by accepting a stainless victim, to appease that violated law which only the blood of the guilty can ever satisfy?

"In order to avert so foul a blot on the escutcheon of our State judiciary, in order to protect innocence from being slaughtered, and supremely in order to track and bring to summary punishment the criminal who robbed and murdered General Darrington, I now desire, and request, that your Honor will permit me to cross-examine the prisoner on the statement she has offered in defence."

"In making that request, counsel must be aware that it is one of the statutory provisions of safety to the accused, whom the law holds innocent until proved guilty, that no coercion can be employed to extort answers. It is, however, the desire of the court, and certainly must accrue to the benefit of the prisoner, that she should take the witness stand in her own defense."

For a moment there was neither sound nor motion.

"Will the prisoner answer such questions as in the opinion of the Court are designed solely to establish her innocence? If so, she will take the stand."

With a sudden passionate movement at variance with her demeanor throughout the trial, she threw up her clasped hands, gazed at them, then pressed them ring downward as a seal upon her lips; and after an instant, answered slowly:

"Now and henceforth, I decline to answer any and all questions. I am innocent, entirely innocent. The burden of proof rests upon my accusers."

As Mr. Dunbar watched her, noted the scarlet spots burning on her cheeks, the strange expression of her eyes that glowed with unnatural lustre, a scowl darkened his face; a cruel smile curved his lips, and made his teeth gleam. Was it worth while to save her against her will; to preserve the heart he coveted, for the vile miscreant to whom she had irrevocably given it? With an upward movement of his noble head, like the impatient toss of a horse intolerant of

curb, he stepped back close to the girl, and stood with his hand on the back of her chair.

"In view of this palpable evasion of justice through obstinate *non responsion*, will it please the Court to overrule the prisoner's objection?"

Several moments elapsed before Judge Parkman replied, and he gnawed the end of his grizzled mustache, debating the consequences of dishonoring precedent—that fetich of the Bench.

"The Court cannot so rule. The prisoner has decided upon the line of defence, as is her inalienable right; and since she persistently assumes that responbility, the Court must sustain her decision."

The expression of infinite and intense relief that stole over the girl's countenance, was noted by both judge and jury, as she sank back wearily in her chair, like one lifted from some rack of torture. Resting thus, her shoulder pressed against the hand that lay on the top of the chair, but he did not move a finger; and some magnetic influence drew her gaze to meet his. He felt the tremor that crept over her, understood the mute appeal, the prayer for forbearance that made her mournful gray eyes so eloquent, and a sinister smile distorted his handsome mouth.

"The spirit and intent of the law, the usages of criminal practice, above all, hoary precedent, before which we bow, each and all sanction your Honor's ruling; and yet despite everything, the end I sought is already attained. Is not the refusal of the prisoner proof positive, 'confirmation strong as proofs of Holy Writ' of the truth of my theory? With jealous dread she seeks to lock the clue in her faithful heart, courting even the coffin, that would keep it safe through all the storms of time. Impregnable in her citadel of silence, with the cohorts of Codes to protect her from escalade and assault, will the guardians of justice have obeyed her solemn commands when they permit the prisoner to light the funeral prye where she elects to throw herself—a vicarious sacrifice for another's sins? For a nature so exalted, the Providence who endowed it has decreed a nobler fate; and by His help, and that of your twelve consciences, I purpose to save her from a species of suicide, and to consign to the hang*man the real* criminal. The evidence now submitted,

will be furnished by the testimony of witnesses who at my request, have been kept without the hearing of the Court."

He left Beryl's chair, and once more approached the jury.

"Isam Hornbuckle."

A negro man, apparently sixty years old, limped into the witness stand, and having been sworn, stood leaning on his stick, staring uneasily about him.

"What is your name?"

"Isam Clay Hornbuckle."

"Where do you live?"

"Nigh the forks of the road, close to 'Possum Ridge."

"How far from town?"

"By short cuts I make it about ten miles; but the gang what works the road calls it twelve."

"Have you a farm there?"

"Yes'ir. A pretty tolerble farm; a cornfield and potato patch and gyarden, and parsture for my hogs, and oxin, and a slipe of woods for my pine knots."

"What is your business?"

"Tryin' to make a livin', and it keeps me bizzy, for lans is poor, and seasons is most ginerally agin crops."

"How long have you been farming?"

"Only sence I got mashed up more 'an a year ago on the railroad."

"In what capacity did you serve, when working on the railroad?"

"I was fireman under ingeneer Walker on the loky-motive 'Gin'l Borygyard,' what most ginerally hauled Freight No. 2. The ingines goes now by numbers, but we ole hands called our'n always 'Borygyard.'"

"You were crippled in a collision between two freight trains?"

"Yes'ir; but t'other train was the cause of the—"

"Never mind the cause of the accident. You moved out to 'Possum Ridge; can you remember exactly when you were last in town?"

"To be shore! I know ezactly, 'cause it was the day my ole 'oman's step-father's granny's funeral sarmont was preached; and that was on a Thurs-

day, twenty-sixth of October, an' I come up to 'tend it."

"Is it not customary to preach the funeral sermons on Sunday?"

"Most ginerally, Boss, it are; but you see Bre'r Green, what was to preach the ole 'oman's sarmont, had a big baptizin' for two Sundays han' runnin', and he was gwine to Boston for a spell, on the next comin' Saddy, so bein' as our time belonks to us now, we was free to 'pint a week day."

"You are positive it was the twenty-sixth?"

"Oh, yes'ir; plum postiv. The day was norated from all the baptiss churches, so as the kinfolks could gether from fur and nigh."

"At what hour on Thursday was the funeral sermon preached?"

"Four o'clock sharp."

"Where did you stay while in town?"

"With my son Ducaleyon, who keeps a barber-shop on Main Street."

"When did you return home?"

"I started before day, Friday mornin', as soon as the rain hilt up."

"At what hour, do you think?"

"The town clock was a strikin' two, jes as I passed the express office, at the station."

"Now, Isam, tell the Court whom you saw, and what happened; and be very careful in all you say, remembering you are on your oath."

"I was atoting a bundle so—slung on to a stick, and it galded my shoulder, 'cause amongst a whole passel of plunder I had bought ther was a bag of shot inside, what had slewed 'round oft the balance, and I sot down close to a lamp-post nigh the station, to shift the heft of the shot bag. Whilst I were a squatting, tying up my bundle, I heerd all of a suddent—somebody runnin', brip—brap—! and up kem a man from round the corner of the station-house, a runnin' full tilt; and he would a run over me, but I grabbed my bundle and riz up. Sez I: 'Hello! what's to pay?' He was most out of breath, but sez he: 'Is the train in yet?' Sez I: 'There ain't no train till daylight, 'cepting it be the through freight.' Then he axed me: 'When is that due?' and I tole him: 'Pretty soon, I

reckon, but it don't stop here ; if only slows up at the water tank, whar it blows for the bridge.' Sez he : 'How fur is that bridge?' Sez I : 'Only a short piece down the track, after you pass the tank.' He tuck a long breath, and kinder whistled, and with that he turned and heeled it down the middle of the track. I thought it mighty curus, and my mind misgive me thar was somethin' crooked ; but I always pintedly dodges ; 'lie-lows to ketch meddlers,' and I went on my way. When I got nigh the next corner whar I had to turn to cross the river, I looked back and I seen a 'oman standin' on the track, in front of the station-house ; but I parsed on, and soon kem to the bridge (not the railroad bridge), Boss. I had got on the top of the hill to the left of the Pentenchry, when I hearn ole 'Bory' blow. You see I knowed the runnin' of the kyars, 'cause that through freight was my ole stormpin-ground, and I love the sound of that ingine's whistle more 'an I do my gran'childun's hymn chunes. She blowed long and vicious like, and I seen her sparks fly, as she lit out through town ; and then I footed it home."

"You think the train was on time?"

"Bound to be ; she never was cotched behind time, not while I stuffed her with coal and lightwood knots. She was plum punctchul."

"Was the lamp lighted where you tied your bundle?"

"Yes'ir, burnin' bright."

"Tell the Court the appearance of the man whom you talked with."

Mr. Dunbar was watching the beautiful face so dear to him, and saw the prisoner lean forward, her lips parted, all her soul in the wide, glowing eyes fastened on the countenance of the witness.

"He was very tall and wiry, and 'peared like a young man who had parstured 'mongst wild oats. He seemed cut out for a gintleman, but run to seed too quick and turned out nigh kin to a dead beat. One-half of him was hanssum, 'minded me mightly of that stone head with kurly hair what sets over the sody fountin in the drug store, on Main Street. Oh, yes'ir, one side was too pretty for a man ; but t'other ! Fo' Gawd ! t'other made your teeth ache, and sot you

cross-eyed to look at it. He toted a awful brand to be shore."

"What do you mean by one side? Explain yourself carefully now."

"I dun'no as I can 'splain' 'cause I ain't never seed nothing like it afore. One 'zact half of him, from his hair to his shirt collar was white and pretty like, I tell you, but t'other side of his face was black as tar, and his kurly hair was gone, and the whiskers on that side —and his eye was drapped down kinder so, and that side of his mouth sorter hung, like it was unpinned, this way. Mebbee he was born so, mebbee not; but he looked like he had jes broke loose from the cunjur and cary'd his mark."

For one fleeting moment, the gates of heaven seemed thrown wide, and the glory of the Kingdom of Peace streamed down upon the aching heart of the desolate woman. She could recognize no dreaded resemblance in the photograph drawn by the witness; and judge, jury and counsel who scrutinized her during the recital of the testimony, were puzzled by the smile of joy that suddenly flashed over her features, like the radiance of a lamp lifted close to some marble face, dim with shadows.

"Do you think his face indicated that he had been engaged in a difficulty, in a fight! Was there any sign of blood, or anything that looked as if he had been bruised and wounded by some heavy blow?"

"Naw, sir. Didn't seem like sech bruises aas omes of fightin'. 'Peared to me he was somehow branded like, and the mark he toted was onnatral."

"If he had wished to disguise himself by blackening one side of his face, would he not have presented a similar appearance?"

"Naw, sir, not by no manner of means. No minstrel tricks fotch him to the pass he was at. The hand of the LORD must have laid too heavy on him; no mortal wounds leave sech terrifyin' prints."

"How was he dressed?"

"Dunno. My eyes never drapped below that curus face of his'n."

"Was he bareheaded?"

"Bar headed as when he come into the world."

"He talked like a man in desperate haste, who was running to escape pursuit?"

"He shorely did."

"Did you mention to any person what you have told here to-day?"

"I tole my ole 'oman, and she said she reckoned it was a buth mark what the man carryd; but when I seen him I thunk he was conjured."

"When you heard that General Darrington had been murdered, did you think of this man and his singular behavior that night?"

"I never hearn of the murder till Christmas, 'cause I went down to Elbert County arter a yoke of steers what a man owed me, and thar I tuck sick and kep' my bed for weeks. When I got home, and hearn the talk about the murder, I didn't know it was the same night what I seen the branded man."

"Tell the Court how your testimony was secured."

"It was norated in all our churches that a 'ward was offered for a lame cullud pusson of my 'scription, and Deacon Nathan he cum down and axed me what mischief I'de been a doin', that I was wanted to answer fur. He read me the 'vertisement, and pussuaded me to go with him to your office, and you tuck me to Mr. Churchill."

Mr. Dunbar bowed to the District Solicitor, who rose and cross-examined.

"Can you read?"

"Naw, sir."

"Where is your son Deucalion?"

"Two days after I left town he went with a 'Love and Charity 'scurshion up north, and he liked it so well in Baltymore, he staid thar."

"When Deacon Nathan brought you up to town, did you know for what purpose Mr. Dunbar wanted you?"

"Naw, sir."

"Was it not rather strange that none of your friends recognized the description of you, published in the paper?"

"Seems some of em did, but felt kind of jub'rus 'bout pinting me out, for human natur is prone to crooked ways, and they never hearn I perfessed sanctification."

"Who told you the prisoner had heard your conversation with the man you met that night?"

"Did she hear it? Then you are the first pusson to tell me."

"How long was it, after you saw the man, before you heard the whistle of the freight train?"

"As nigh as I kin rickolect about a half a hour, but not quite."

"Was it raining at all when you saw the woman standing on the track?"

"Naw, sir. The trees was dripping steady, but the moon was shining."

"Do you know anything about the statement made by the prisoner?"

"Naw, sir."

"Fritz Helmetag."

As Isam withdrew, a middle-aged man took the stand, and in answer to Mr. Dunbar's questions deposed: "That he was 'bridge tender' on the railroad, and lived in a cottage not far from the water tank. On the night of the twenty-sixth of October, he was sitting up with a sick wife, and remembered that being feverish, she asked for some fresh water. He went out to draw some from the well, and saw a man standing not far from the bridge. The moon was behind a row of trees, but he noticed the man was bareheaded, and when he called to know what he wanted, he walked back toward the tank. Five minutes later the freight train blew, and after it had crossed the bridge, he went back to his cottage. The man was standing close to the safety signal, a white light fastened to an iron stanchion at south end of the bridge, and seemed to be reading something. Next day, when he (witness) went as usual to examine the piers and under portions of the bridge, he had found the pipe, now in Mr. Dunbar's possession. Tramps so often rested on the bridge, and on the shelving bank of the river beneath it, that he attached no importance to the circumstance; but felt confident the pipe was left by the man whom he had seen, as it was not there the previous afternoon; and he put it in a pigeon-hole of his desk, thinking the owner might return to claim it. On the same day, he left X—— to carry his wife to her mother, who lived in Pennsylvania, and was absent for several weeks.

Had never associated the pipe with the murder, but after talking with Mr. Dunbar, who had found the half of an envelope near the south end of the bridge, he had surrendered it to him. Did not see the man's face distinctly. He looked tall and thin."

"Here Mr. Dunbar held up a fragment of a long white envelope such as usually contain legal documents, on which was written in large letters "LAST WILL"— and underscored with red ink. Then he lifted a pipe, for the inspection of the witness, who identified it as the one he had found.

" As he turned it slowly, the court and the multitude saw only a meerschaum with a large bowl representing a death's head, to which was attached a short mouth-piece of twisted amber.

The golden gates of hope clashed suddenly, and over them flashed a drawn sword, as Beryl looked at the familiar pipe, which her baby fingers had so often strained to grasp. How well she knew the ghastly ivory features, the sunken eyeless sockets—of that veritable death's head? " How vividly came back the day, when asleep in her father's arms, a spark from that grinning skull had fallen on her cheek, and she awoke to find that fond father bending in remorseful tenderness over her ? " Years ago, she had reverently packed the pipe away, with other articles belonging to the dead, and ignorant that her mother had given it to Bertie, she deemed it safe in that sacred repository. Now, like the face of Medusa it glared at her, and that which her father's lips had sanctified, became the polluted medium of a retributive curse upon his devoted child. So the *Diabolus ex machina*, the evil genius of each human life decrees that the most cruel cureless pangs are inflicted by the instruments we love best.

Watching for some sign of recognition, Mr. Dunbar's heart was fired with jealous rage, as he marked the swift change of the prisoner's contenance ; the vanishing of the gleam of hope, the gloomy desperation that succeeded. The beautiful black brows met in a spasm of pain over eyes that stared at an abyss of ruin ; her lips whitened, she wrung her hands unconsciously ; and then, as if numb with horror, she leaned back in her chair, and her chin sank until it touched the black ribbon at her throat. When after a while she rallied,

and forced herself to listen, a pleasant-faced young man was on the witness stand.

"My name is Edgar Jennings, and I live at T——, in Pennsylvania. I am ticket agent at that point, of —— railway. One day, about the last of October (I think it was on Monday), I was sitting in my office when a man came in, and asked if I could sell him a ticket to St. Paul. I told him I only had tickets as far as Chicago, *via* Cincinnati. He bought one to Cincinnati and asked how soon he could go on. I told him the train from the east was due in a few minutes. When he paid for his ticket he gave me a twenty-dollar gold piece, and his hand shook so, he dropped another piece of the same value on the floor. His appearance was so remarkable I noticed him particularly. He was a man about my age, very tall and finely made, but one half of his face was black, or rather very dark blue, and he wore a handkerchief bandage-fashion across it. His left eye was drawn down, this way, and his mouth was one-sided. His right eye was black, and his hair was very light brown. He wore a close-fitting wool hat, that flapped down, and his clothes were seal-brown in color, but much worn, and evidently old. I asked him where he lived, and he said he was a stranger going West, on a pioneering tour. Then I asked what ailed his face, and he pulled the handkerchief over his left eye, and said he was partly paralyzed from an accident. Just then, the eastern train blew for T——. He said he wanted some cigars or a pipe, as he had lost his own on the way, and wondered if he would have time to go out and buy some. I told him no; but that he could have a couple of cigars from my box. He thanked me, and took two, laying down a silver dime on top of the box. He put his hand in the inside pocket of his coat, and pulled out an empty envelope, twisted it, lit it by the coal fire in the grate, and lighted his cigar. The train rolled into the station; he passed out, and I saw him jump aboard the front passenger coach. He had thrown the paper, as he thought, into the fire, but it slipped off the grate, fell just inside the fender, and the flame went out. There was something so very peculiar in his looks and manner, that I thought there was some mystery about his movements. I picked up

the paper, saw the writing on it, and locked it up in my cash drawer. He had evidently been a very handsome man, before his 'accident,' but he had a jaded, worried, wretched look. When a detective from Baltimore interviewed me, I told him all I knew, and gave him the paper."

Again Mr. Dunbar drew closer to the jury, held up the former fragment of envelope, and then took from his pocket a second piece. Jagged edges fitted into each other, and he lifted for the inspection of hundreds of eyes, the long envelope marked and underscored:—"LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ROBERT LUKE DARRINGTON." The lower edge of the paper was at one corner brown, scorched, somewhat burned.

"Lucullus Grantlin."

An elderly man of noble presence advanced, and Mr. Dunbar met and shook hands with him, accompanying him almost to the stand. At sight of his white head, and flowing silvery beard, Beryl's heart almost ceased its pulsation. If, during her last illness her mother had acquainted him with their family history, then indeed all was lost. It was as impossible to reach him and implore his silence, as though the ocean rocked between them; and how would he interpret the pleading gaze she fixed upon his face? The imminence of the danger, vanquished every scruple, strangled her pride. She caught Mr. Dunbar's eye, beckoned him to approach.

When he stood before her, she put out her hand, seized one of his, and drew him down until his black head almost touched hers. She placed her lips close to his ear, and whispered:

"For God's sake spare the secrets of a death-bed. Be merciful to me now; oh! I entreat you—do not drag my mother from her grave! Do not question Dr. Grantlin."

She locked her icy hands around his, pressing it convulsively. Turning, he laid his lips close to the silky fold of hair that had fallen across her ear:

"If I dismiss this witness, will you tell me the truth? Will you give me the name of the man whom I am hunting? Will you confess all to me?"

"I have no sins to confess. I have made my last statement. If you laid my coffin at my feet, I should

only say I am innocent; I would tell you nothing more."

"Then his life is so precious, you are resolved to die rather than trust me?"

She dropped his hand, and leaned back in her chair closing her eyes. When she opened them, Doctor Grantlin was speaking:

"I am on my way to Havana, with an invalid daughter, and stopped here last night, at the request of Mr. Dunbar."

"Please state all that you know of the prisoner, and of the circumstances which induced her to visit X——."

"I first saw the prisoner in August last, when she summoned me to see her mother who was suffering from an attack of fever. I discovered that she was in a dangerous condition in consequence of an aneurism located in the carotid artery, and when she had been relieved of malarial fever, I told both mother and daughter that an operation was necessary, to remove the aneurism. Soon after, I left the city for a month, and on my return the daughter again called me in. I advised that without delay the patient should be removed to the hospital, where a surgeon—a specialist—could perform the operation. To this the young lady objected, on the ground that she could not assist in nursing, if her mother entered the hospital, and she would not consent to the separation. She asked what amount would be required to secure at home the services of the surgeon, a trained nurse, and the subsequent treatment; and I told her I thought a hundred dollars would cover all incidentals, and secure one of the most skilful surgeons in the city. I continued from time to time to see the mother, and administered such medicines as I deemed necessary to invigorate and tone up the patient's system for the operation. One day in October, the young lady came to pay me for some prescriptions, and asked if a few weeks' delay would enhance the danger of the operation. I assured her it was important to lose no time, and urged her to arrange matters so as to remove the patient to the hospital as soon as possible, offering to procure her admission. She showed great distress, and informed me that she hoped to receive very soon a considerable

sum of money, from some artistic designs that she felt sure would secure the prize. A week later she came again, and I gave her a prescription to allay her mother's nervousness. Then, with much agitation, she told me that she was going South by the night express, to seek assistance from her mother's father, who was a man of wealth, but had disowned Mrs. Brentano on account of her marriage. She asked for a written statement of the patient's condition, and the absolute necessity of the operation. I wrote it, and as she stood looking at the paper, she said:

"'Doctor, do you believe in an *Ahnung?*' I said 'A what?' She answered slowly and solemnly: "An *Ahnung*— presentiment? I have a crushing presentiment that trouble will come to me, if I leave mother; and yet she entreats, commands me to go South. It is my duty to obey her, but the errand is so humiliating I shrink, I dread it. I shall not be long away, and meanwhile do please be so kind as to see her, and cheer her up. If her father refuses to give me the one hundred dollars, I will take her to the hospital when I return.' I walked to the door with her, and her last words were: 'Doctor, I trust my mother to you; don't let her suffer.' I have never seen her again, until I entered this room. I visited Mrs. Brentano several times, but she grew worse very rapidly. One night the ensuing week, my bell was rung at twelve o'clock, and a woman gave me this note, which was written by the prisoner immediately after her arrest, and which enclosed a second, addressed to her mother."

As he read aloud the concluding lines invoking the mother's prayers, the doctor's voice trembled. He took off his spectacles, wiped them, and resumed:

"I was shocked and distressed beyond expression, for I could no more connect the idea of crime with that beautiful, noble souled girl, than with my own sinless daughter; and I reproached myself then, and doubly condemn myself now, that I did not lend her the money. All that was possible to alleviate the suffering of that mother, I did most faithfully. Under my personal superintendence she was made comfortable in the hospital; and I stood by her side when Doctor —— operated on the aneurism; but her im-

paired constitution could not bear the strain, and she sank rapidly. She was delirious, and never knew why her daughter was detained; because I withheld the note. Just before the end came, her mind cleared, and she wrote a few lines which I sent to the prisoner. From all that I know of Miss Brentano, I feel constrained to say, she impressed me as one of the purest, noblest, and most admirable characters I have ever met. She supported her mother and herself by her pencil, and a more refined, sensitive woman, a more tenderly devoted daughter, I have yet to meet."

"Does your acquaintance with the family suggest any third party, who would be interested in General Darrington's will or become a beneficiary by its destruction?"

"No. They seemed very isolated people; those two women lived without any acquaintances, as far as I know, and appeared proudly indifferent to the outside world. I do not think they had any relatives, and the only name I heard Mrs. Brentano utter in her last illness was, 'Ignace,—Ignace.' She often spoke of her 'darling,' and her 'good little girl'."

"Did you see a gentleman who visited the prisoner? Did you ever hear she had a lover?"

"I neither saw any gentleman, nor heard she had a lover. In January, I received a letter from the prisoner enclosing an order on S—— & E——, photographers of New York, for the amount due her, on a certain design for a Christmas card, which had received the Boston first prize of three hundred dollars. With the permission of the Court, I should like to read it. There is no objection?"

"PENITENTIARY CELL, January 8th.

"In the name of my dead, whom I shall soon join—I desire to thank you, dear Doctor Grantlin, for your kind care of my darling; and especially for your delicate and tender regard for all that remains on earth of my precious mother. The knowledge that she was treated with the reverence due to a lady, that she was buried—not as a pauper, but sleeps her last sleep under the same marble roof that shelters your dear departed ones, is the one ray of comfort that can ever pierce the awful gloom that has settled like a pall over me. I am to be tried soon for the black and horrible crime I never committed; and the evidence is so strong against me, the circumstances I cannot explain, are so accusing, the belief of my guilt is so general in this community,

that I have no hope of acquittal; therefore I make my preparations for death. Please collect the money for which I enclose an order, and out of it, take the amount you spent when mother died. It will comfort me to know, that we do not owe a stranger for the casket that shuts her away from all grief, into the blessed Land of Peace. Keep the remainder, and when you hear that I am dead, unjustly offered up an innocent victim to appease justice, that must have somebody's blood in expiation, then take my body and mother's and have us laid side by side in the Potter's field. The law will crush my body, but it is pure and free from every crime, and it will be worthy still to touch my mother's in a common grave. Oh, Doctor! Does it not seem that some terrible curse has pursued me; and that the three hundred dollars I toiled and prayed for, was kept back ten days too late to save me? My Christmas card will at least bury us decently—away from the world that trampled me down. Do not doubt my innocence, and it will comfort me to feel that he who closed my mother's eyes, believes that her unfortunate child is guiltless and unstained. In life, and in death, ever

"Most gratefully your debtor,

"BERYL BRENTANO."

A few moments of profound silence ensued; then Doctor Grantlin handed some article to Mr. Dunbar, and stepping down from the stand, walked toward the prisoner.

She had covered her face with her hands, while he gave his testimony; striving to hide the anguish that his presence revived. He placed his hand on her shoulder, and whispered brokenly:

"My child, I know you are innocent. Would to God I could help you to prove it to these people!"

The terrible strain gave way suddenly, her proud head was laid against his arm, and suppressed emotion shook her, as a December storm smites and bows some shivering weed.

Friday, the fifth and last day of the trial, was ushered in by a tempest of wind and rain, that drove the blinding sheets of sleet against the court-house windows with the insistence of an icy flail; while now and then with spasmodic bursts of fury the gale heightened, rattled the sash, moaned hysterically, like invisible fiends tearing at the obstacles that barred entrance. So dense was the gloom pervading the court-room, that every gas jet was burning at ten o'clock, when Mr. Dunbar rose and took a position close to the jury-box. The gray pallor of his sternly

set face increased his resemblance to a statue of the Julian type, and he looked rigid as granite, as he turned his brilliant eyes full of blue fire upon the grave, upturned countenances of the twelve umpires:

"Gentlemen of the Jury: The sanctity of human life is the foundation on which society rests, and its preservation is the supreme aim of all human legislation. Rights of property, of liberty, are merely conditional, subordinated to the superlative, divine right of life. Labor creates property, law secures liberty, but God alone gives life; and woe to that tribunal, to those consecrated priests of divine justice, who, sworn to lay aside passion and prejudice, and to array themselves in the immaculate robes of a juror's impartiality, yet profane the loftiest prerogative with which civilized society can invest mankind, and sacrilegiously extinguish, in the name of justice, that sacred spark which only Jehovah's fiat kindles. To the same astute and unchanging race, whose relentless code of jurisprudence demanded 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life,' we owe the instructive picture of cautious inquiry, of tender solicitude for the inviolability of human life, that glows in immortal lustre on the pages of the '*Mechilta*' of the Talmud. In the trial of a Hebrew criminal, there were '*Lactees*,' consisting of two men, one of whom stood at the door of the court, with a red flag in his hand, and the other sat on a white horse at some distance on the road that led to execution. Each of these men cried aloud continually, the name of the suspected criminal, of the witnesses, and his crime; and vehemently called upon any person who knew *anything in his favor* to come forward and testify. Have we, supercilious braggarts of this age of progress, attained the prudential wisdom of Sanhedrim?

"The State pays an officer to sift, probe, collect and array the evidences of crime, with which the criminal is stoned to death; does it likewise commission and compensate an equally painstaking, lynx-eyed official whose sole duty is to hunt and proclaim proofs of the innocence of the accused? The great body of the commonwealth is committed in revengeful zeal to prosecution; upon whom devolves the doubly sacred and imperative duty of defence? Are you not here to

give judgment in a cause based on an indictment by a secret tribunal, where *ex parte* testimony was alone received, and the voice of defence could not be heard? The law infers that the keen instinct of self-preservation will force the accused to secure the strongest possible legal defenders; and failing in this, the law perfunctorily assigns counsel to present testimony in defence. Do the scales balance?

"Imagine a race for heavy stakes; the judges tap the bell; three or four superb thoroughbreds carefully trained on that track, laboriously groomed, waiting for the signal, spring forward; and when the first quarter is reached, a belated fifth, handicapped with the knowledge that he has made a desperately bad start, bounds after them. If by dint of some superhuman grace vouchsafed, some latent strain, some most unexpected speed, he nears, overtakes, runs neck and neck, slowly gains, passes all four and dashes breathless and quivering under the string, a whole length ahead, the world of spectators shouts, the judges smile, and number five wins the stakes. But was the race fair?

"Is not justice, the beloved goddess of our idolatry, sometimes so blinded by clouds of argument, and confused by clamor that she fails indeed to see the dip of the beam? If the accused be guilty and escape conviction, he still lives; and while it is provided that no one can be twice put in jeopardy of his life for the same offence, vicious tendencies impel to renewal of crime, and Nemesis, the retriever of justice, may yet hunt him down. If the accused be innocent as the archangels, but suffer conviction and execution, what expiation can justice offer for judicially slaughtering him? Are the chances even?

"All along the dim vista of the annals of criminal jurisprudence, stand grim memorials that mark the substitution of innocent victims for guilty criminals; and they are solemn sign-posts of warning, melancholy as the whitening bones of perished caravans in desert sands. History relates, and tradition embalms, a sad incident of the era of the Council of Ten, when an innocent boy was seized, tried and executed for the murder of a nobleman, whose real assassin confessed the crime many years subsequent. In commemoration

of the public horror manifested, when the truth was published, Venice decreed that henceforth a crier should proclaim in the Tribunal just before a death sentence was pronounced, '*Ricordatevi del povero Marcolini!* remember the poor Marcolini;' beware of merely circumstantial evidence.

"To another instance I invite your attention. A devoted Scotch father finding that his only child had contracted an unfortunate attachment to a man of notoriously bad character, interdicted all communication, and locked his daughter into a tenement room; the adjoining apartment (with only a thin partition wall between) being occupied by a neighbor, who overheard the angry altercation that ensued. He recognized the voices of father and daughter, and the words 'barbarity,' 'cruelty,' 'death,' were repeatedly heard. The father at last left the room, locking his child in as a prisoner. After a time, strange noises were heard by the tenant of the adjoining chamber; suspicion was aroused, a bailiff was summoned, the door forced open, and there lay the dying girl weltering in blood, with the fatal knife lying near. She was asked if her father had caused her sad condition, and she made an affirmative gesture and expired. At that moment the father returned, and stood stupefied with horror, which was interpreted as a consciousness of guilt; and this was corroborated by the fact that his shirt sleeve was sprinkled with blood. In vain he asserted his innocence, and showed that the blood stains were the result of a bandage having become untied where he had bled himself a few days before. The words and groans overheard, the blood, the affirmation of the dying woman, every damning circumstance constrained the jury to convict him of the murder. He was hung in chains, and his body left swinging from the gibbet. The new tenant, who subsequently rented the room, was ransacking the chamber in which the girl died, when, in a cavity of the chimney where it had fallen unnoticed, was found a paper written by this girl, declaring her intention to commit suicide, and closing with the words: 'My inhuman father is the cause of my death'; thus explaining her dying gestures. On examination of this document by the friends and relatives of the girl, it was recognized and identi-

fied as her handwriting; and it established the fact that the father had died innocent of every crime, except that of trying to save his child from a degrading marriage.

"Now, mark the prompt and satisfactory reparation, decreed by justice, and carried out by the officers of the law. The shrivelled, dishonored body was lowered from the gibbet, given to his relatives for decent burial, and the magistrates who sentenced him, ordered a flag waved over his grave, as compensation for all his wrongs.

"Gentlemen of the jury, to save you from the commission of a wrong even more cruel, I come to-day to set before you clearly the facts, elicited from witnesses which the honorable and able counsel for the prosecution declined to cross-examine. An able expounder of the law of evidence has warned us that: 'The force of circumstantial evidence being exclusive in its nature, and the mere coincidence of the hypothesis with the circumstances, being, in the abstract, insufficient, unless they *exclude every other supposition*, it is essential to inquire, with the most scrupulous attention, what other hypotheses *there may be*, agreeing wholly or partially with the facts in evidence.'

"A man of very marked appearance was seen running toward the railroad, on the night of the twenty-sixth, evidently goaded by some unusual necessity to leave the neighborhood of X—— before the arrival of the passenger express. It is proved that he passed the station exactly at the time the prisoner deposed she heard the voice, and the half of the envelope that enclosed the missing will, was found at the spot where the same person was seen, only a few moments later. Four days afterward, this man entered a small station in Pennsylvania, paid for a railroad ticket, with a coin identical in value and appearance with those stolen from the tin box, and as if foreordained to publish the steps he was striving to efface, accidentally left behind him the trumpet-tongued fragment of envelope, that exactly fitted into the torn strip dropped at the bridge. The most exhaustive and diligent search shows that stranger was seen by no one else in X——; that he came as a thief in the night, provided with chloroform to drug his intended victim, and having been detected

in the act of burglariously abstracting the contents of the tin box, fought with, and killed the venerable old man, whom he had robbed.

"Under cover of storm and darkness he escaped with his plunder to some point north of X——, where doubtless he boarded (unperceived) the freight train, and at some convenient point slipped into a wooded country, and made his way to Pennsylvania. Why were valuable bonds untouched? Because they might aid in betraying him. What conceivable interest had he in the destruction of General Darrington's will? It is in evidence, that the lamp was burning, and the contents of that envelope could have possessed no value for a man ignorant of the provisions of the will; and the superscription it was impossible to misread. Suppose that this mysterious person was fully cognizant of the family secrets of the Darringtons? Suppose that he knew that Mrs. Brentano and her daughter would inherit a large fortune, if General Darrington died intestate? If he had wooed and won the heart of the daughter, and believed that her rights had been sacrificed to promote the aggrandizement of an alien, the adopted step-son Prince, had not such a man, the accepted lover of the daughter, a personal interest in the provisions of a will which disinherited Mrs. Brentano, and her child? Have you not now, motive, means, and opportunity, and links of evidence that point to this man as the real agent, the guilty author of the awful crime we are all leagued in solemn, legal covenant to punish? Suppose that fully aware of the prisoner's mission to X——, he had secretly followed her, and supplemented her afternoon visit, by the fatal interview of the night? Doubtless he had intended escorting her home, but when the frightful tragedy was completed, the curse of Cain drove him, in terror, to instant flight; and he sought safety in western wilds, leaving his innocent and hapless betrothed to bear the penalty of his crime. The handkerchief used to administer chloroform, bore her initials; was doubtless a souvenir given in days gone by to that unworthy miscreant, as a token of affection, by the trusting woman he deserted in the hour of peril. In this solution of an awful enigma, is there *an undue* strain upon credulity; is there any antagon-

ism of facts, which the torn envelope, the pipe, the twenty-dollar gold pieces seen in Pennsylvania, do not reconcile?

"A justly celebrated writer on the law of evidence has wisely said: 'In criminal cases, the statement made by the accused is of essential importance in some points of view. Such is the complexity of human affairs, and so infinite the combinations of circumstances, that the true hypothesis which is capable of explaining and reuniting all the apparently conflicting circumstances of the case, may escape the acutest penetration: but the prisoner, so far as he alone is concerned, can always afford a clue to them; and though he may be unable to support his statement by evidence, his account of the transaction is, for this purpose, always most material and important. The effect may be to suggest a view, which consists with the innocence of the accused, and might otherwise have escaped observation.'

"During the preliminary examination of this prisoner in October, she inadvertently furnished this clue, when, in explaining her absence from the station house, she stated that suddenly awakened from sleep, '*she heard the voice of one she knew and loved*' and 'ran out to seek the speaker.' Twice she has repeated the conversation she heard, and every word is corroborated by the witness who saw and talked with the owner of that 'beloved voice.' When asked to give the name of that man, whom she expected to find in the street, she falters, refuses; love seals her lips, and the fact that she will die sooner than yield that which must bring him to summary justice, is alone sufficient to fix the guilt upon the real culprit.

"There is a rule in criminal jurisprudence, that 'presumptive evidence ought never to be relied on, when direct testimony is wilfully withheld.' She shudders at sight of the handkerchief; did she not give it to him, in some happy hour as a tender *Ricordo?* When the pipe which he lost in his precipitate flight is held up to the jury, she recognizes it instantly as her lover's property, and shivers with horror at the danger of his detection and apprehension. Does not this array of accusing circumstances demand as careful consideration, as the chain held up to your scrutiny by the

prosecution? In the latter, there is an important link missing, which the theory of the defence supplies. When the prisoner was arrested and searched, there was found in her possession only the exact amount of money, which it is in evidence, that she came South to obtain; and which she has solemnly affirmed was given to her by General Darrington. We know from memoranda found in the rifled box, that it contained only a few days previous, five hundred dollars in gold. Three twenty-dollar gold coins were discovered on the carpet, and one in the vault; what became of the remaining three hundred and twenty dollars? With the exception of one hundred dollars found in the basket of the prisoner, she had only five copper pennies in her purse, when so unexpectedly arrested, that it was impossible she could have secreted anything. Three hundred and twenty dollars disappeared in company with the will, and like the torn envelope, two of those gold coins lifted their accusing faces in Pennsylvania, where the fugitive from righteous retribution paid for the wings that would transport him beyond the risk of detection.

"Both theories presented for your careful analysis, are based entirely upon circumstantial evidence; and is not the solution I offer less repugnant to the canons of credibility, and infinitely less revolting to every instinct of honorable manhood, than the horrible hypothesis that a refined, cultivated, noble Christian woman, a devoted daughter, irreproachable in antecedent life, bearing the fiery ordeal of the past four months with a noble heroism that commands the involuntary admiration of all who have watched her—that such a perfect type of beautiful womanhood as the prisoner presents, could deliberately plan and execute the vile scheme of theft and murder? Gentlemen, she is guilty of but one sin against the peace and order of this community: the sin of withholding the name of one for whose bloody crime she is not responsible. Does not her invincible loyalty, her unwavering devotion to the craven for whom she suffers, invest her with the halo of a martyrdom, that appeals most powerfully to the noblest impulses of your nature, that enlists the warmest, holiest sympathies lying deep in your manly hearts? Analyze her statement; every utterance *bears* the stamp of innocence; and where she cannot

explain truthfully, she declines to make any explanation. Hers is the sin of silence, the grievous evasion of justice by non-responsion, whereby the danger she will not avert by confession recoils upon her innocent head. Bravely she took on her reluctant shoulders the galling burden of parental command, and stifling her proud repugnance, obediently came—a fair young stranger to 'Elm Bluff.' Receiving as a loan the money she came to beg for, she hurries away to fulfil another solemnly imposed injunction.

"Gentlemen, is there any spot out yonder in God's Acre, where violets, blue as the eyes that once smiled upon you, now shed their fragrance above the sacred dust of your dead darlings, and the thought of which melts your hearts and dims your vision? Look at this mournful, touching witness, which comes from that holy cemetery to whisper to your souls, that the hands of the prisoner are as pure as those of your idols, folded under the sod. Only a little bunch of withered brown flowers, tied with a faded blue ribbon, that a poor girl bought with her hard earned pennies, and carried to a sick mother, to brighten a dreary attic; only a dead nosegay, which that mother requested should be laid as a penitential tribute on the tomb of the mother whom she had disobeyed; and this faithful young heart made the pilgrimage, and left the offering—and in consequence thereof, missed the train that would have carried her safely back to her mother—and to peace. On the morning after the preliminary examination I went to the cemetery, and found the fatal flowers just where she had placed them, on the great marble cross that covers the tomb of 'Helena Tracey—wife of Luke Darrington.'

"You husbands and fathers who trust your names, your honor, the peace of your hearts—almost the salvation of your souls—to the women you love; staking the dearest interest of humanity, the sanctity of that heaven on earth—your stainless homes—upon the fidelity of womanhood, can you doubt for one instant, that the prisoner will accept death rather than betray the man she loves? No human plummet has sounded the depths of a woman's devotion; no surveyor's chain will ever mark the limits of a woman's faithful, patient endurance; and only the wings of an archangel can

transcend that pinnacle to which the sublime principle of self-sacrifice exalts a woman's soul.

"In a quaint old city on the banks of the Pegnitz, history records an instance of feminine self-abnegation, more enduring than monuments of brass. The law had decreed a certain provision for the maintenance of orphans; and two women in dire distress, seeing no possible avenue of help, accused themselves falsely of a capital crime, and were executed; thereby securing a support for the children they orphaned.

"As a tireless and vigilant prosecutor of the real criminal, the Cain-branded man now wandering in some western wild, I charge the prisoner with only one sin, suicidal silence; and I commend her to your most tender compassion, believing that in every detail and minutiæ she has spoken the truth; and that she is as innocent of the charge in the indictment as you or I. Remember that you have only presumptive proof to guide you in this solemn deliberation, and in the absence of direct proof do not be deluded by a glittering sophistry, which will soon attempt to persuade you that: 'A presumption which necessarily arises from circumstances, is very often more convincing and more satisfactory than any other kind of evidence; it is not within the reach and compass of human abilities to invent a train of circumstances, which shall be so connected together as to amount to a proof of guilt, without affording opportunities of contradicting a great part, if not all, of these circumstances.'

"Believe it not; circumstantial evidence has caused as much innocent blood to flow, as the cimeter of Jenghiz Khan. The counsel for the prosecution will tell you that every fact in this melancholy case stabs the prisoner, and that facts cannot lie. Abstractly and logically considered, facts certainly do not lie; but let us see whether the inferences deduced from what we believe to be facts, do not sometimes eclipse Ananias and Sapphira! Not long ago, the public heart thrilled with horror at the tidings of the Ashtabula railway catastrophe, in which a train of cars plunged through a bridge, took fire, and a number of passengers were consumed, charred beyond recognition. Soon afterward, a poor woman, mother of two children, commenced suit against the railway company, alleging

.hat her husband had perished in that disaster. The evidence adduced was only of a circumstantial nature, as the body which had been destroyed by flames, could not be found. Searching in the *débris* at the fatal spot, she had found a bunch of keys, that she positively recognized as belonging to her husband, and in his possession when he died. One key fitted the clock in her house, and a mechanic was ready to swear that he had made such a key for the deceased. Another key fitted a chest she owned, and still another fitted the door of her house; while, strongest of all proof, she found a piece of cloth which she identified as part of her husband's coat. A physician who knew her husband, testified that he rode as far as Buffalo on the same train with the deceased, on the fatal day of the disaster; and another witness deposed that he saw the deceased take the train at Buffalo, that went down to ruin at Ashtabula. Certainly the chain of circumstantial evidence, from veracious facts, seemed complete; but lo! during the investigation it was ascertained beyond doubt, to the great joy of the wife, that the husband had never been near Ashtabula, and was safe and well at a Pension Home in a Western State.

"The fate of a very noble and innocent woman is now committed to your hands, and only presumptive proof is laid before you. 'The circumstance is always a fact; the presumption is the inference drawn from that fact. It is hence called presumptive proof, because it proceeds merely in opinion.' Suffer no brilliant sophistry to dazzle your judgment, no remnant of prejudice to swerve you from the path of fidelity to your oath. To your calm reasoning, your generous manly hearts, your Christian consciences, I resign the desolate prisoner; and as you deal with her, so may the God above us, the just and holy God who has numbered the hairs of her innocent head, deal here and hereafter with you and yours."

That magnetic influence, whereby the emotions of an audience are swayed, as the tides that follow the moon, was in large measure the heritage of the handsome man who held the eyes of the jurymen in an almost unwinking gaze; and when his uplifted arm slowly fell to his side, Judge Dent grasped it in mute

congratulation, and Mr. Churchill took his hand, and shook it warmly.

Mr. Wolverton came forward to sum up the evidence for the prosecution, and laboriously recapitulated and dwelt upon the mass of facts, which he claimed was susceptible of but one interpretation, and must compel the jury to convict, in accordance with the indictment.

Upon the ears of the prisoner, his words fell as a harsh, meaningless murmur; and above the insistent mutter, rose and fell the waves of a rich, resonant voice, that surrounded, penetrated, electrified her brain; thrilled her whole being with a strange and inexplicable sensation of happiness. For months she had fought against the singular fascination that dwelt in those brilliant blue eyes, and lurked in every line of the swart, stern face; holding at bay the magnetic attraction which he exerted from the hour of the preliminary examination. Of all men, she had feared him most, had shrunk from every opportunity of contact, had execrated him as the malign personification, the veritable incarnation of the evil destiny that had hounded her from the day she first saw X——.

Listening to his appeal for her deliverance, each word throbbing with the fervent heat of a heart that she knew was all her own, an exquisite sense of rest gradually stole over her; as a long-suffering child spent with pain, sinks, soothed at last in the enfolding arms of protective love. That dark, eloquent face drew, held her gaze with the spell of a loadstone, and even in the imminence of her jeopardy, she recalled the strange resemblance he bore to the militant angel she had once seen in a painting, where he wrestled with Satan for possession of the body of Moses. Disgrace, peril, the gaunt spectre of death suddenly dissolved, vanished in the glorious burst of rosy light that streamed into all the chill chambers of her heart; and she bowed her head in her hands, to hide the crimson that painted her cheeks.

How long Mr. Wolverton talked, she never knew: but the lull that succeeded was broken by the tones of Judge Parkman.

"Beryl Brentano, it is my duty to remind you that this is the last opportunity the law allows you, to *speak* in your own vindication. The testimony has

all been presented to those appointed to decide upon its value. If there be any final statement that you may desire to offer in self-defence, you must make it now."

Could the hundreds who watched and waited ever forget the sight of that superb, erect figure, that exquisite face, proud as Hypatia's, patient as Perpetua's, or the sound of that pathetic, unwavering voice? Mournfully, yet steadily, she raised her great gray eyes, darkened by the violet shadows suffering had cast, and looked at her judges.

"I am guiltless of any and all crime. I have neither robbed, nor murdered; and I am neither principal, nor accomplice in the horrible sin imputed to me. I know nothing of the chloroform; I never touched the andiron; I never saw General Darrington but once. He gave me the gold and the sapphires, and I am as innocent of his death, and of the destruction of his will as the sinless little children who prattle at your firesides, and nestle to sleep in your arms. My life has been disgraced and ruined by no act of mine, for I have kept my hands, my heart, my soul, as pure and free from crime as they were when God gave them to me. I am the helpless prey of suspicion, and the guiltless victim of the law. O, my judges! I do not crave your mercy—that is the despairing prayer of conscious guilt; I demand at your hands, justice.'

The rushing sound as of a coming flood filled her ears, and her words echoed vaguely from some immeasurably distant height. The gaslights seemed whirling in a Walpurgis maze, as she sat down and once more veiled her face in her hands.

When she recovered sufficiently to listen, Mr. Churchill had risen for the closing speech of the prosecution.

"Gentlemen of the Jury: I were a blot upon a noble profession, a disgrace to honorable manhood, and a monster in my own estimation, if I could approach the fatal Finis of this melancholy trial, without painful emotions of profound regret, that the solemn responsibility of my official position makes me the reluctant bearer of the last stern message uttered by retributive justice. How infinitely more enviable

the duty of the *Amicus Curiæ*, my gallant friend and *quondam* colleague, who in voluntary defence has so ingeniously, eloquently and nobly led a forlorn hope, that he knew was already irretrievably lost! Desperate, indeed, must he deem that cause for which he battles so valiantly, when dire extremity goads him to lift a rebellious and unfilial voice against the provisions of his foster-mother, Criminal Jurisprudence, in whose service he won the brilliant distinction and crown of laurel that excite the admiration and envy of a large family of his less fortunate foster-brothers. I honor his heroism, applaud his chivalrous zeal, and wish that I stood in his place; but not mine the privilege of mounting the white horse, and waving the red flag of the 'Lactees.' Dedicated to the mournful rites of justice, I have laid an iron hand on the quivering lips of pity, that cried to me like the voice of one of my own little ones; and very sorrowfully, at the command of conscience, reason and my official duty, I obey the mandate to ring down the black curtain on a terrible tragedy, feeling like Dante, when he confronted the doomed—

"'And to a part I come, where no light shines.'

So clearly and ably has my distinguished associate, Mr. Wolverton, presented all the legal points bearing upon the nature and value of the proof, submitted for your examination, that any attempt to buttress his powerful argument, were an unpardonable reflection upon your intelligence, and his skill; and I shall confine my last effort in behalf of justice, to a brief analysis and comparison of the hypothesis of the defence, with the verified result of the prosecution.

"Beautiful and sparkling as the frail glass of Murano, and equally as thin, as treacherously brittle, is the theory so skilfully manufactured in behalf of the accused; and so adroitly exhibited that the ingenious facets catch every possible gleam, and for a moment almost dazzle the eyes of the beholder. In attempting to cast a lance against the shield of circumstantial evidence, his weapon rebounded, recoiled upon his fine spun crystal and shivered it. What were the *materials* wherewith he worked? Circumstances,

strained, well nigh dislocated by the effort to force them to fit into his Procrustean measure. A man was seen on the night of the twenty-sixth, who appeared unduly anxious to quit X—— before daylight; and again the mysterious stranger was seen in a distant town in Pennsylvania, where he showed some gold coins of a certain denomination, and dropped on the floor one-half of an envelope, that once contained a will. In view of these circumstances (the prosecution calls them facts), the counsel for the defence *presumes* that said stranger committed the murder, stole the will; and offers this opinion as presumptive proof that the prisoner is innocent. The argument runs thus: this man was an accepted lover of the accused, and therefore he must have destroyed the will that beggared his betrothed; but it is nowhere in evidence, that any lover existed, outside of the counsel's imagination; yet Asmodeus like he must appear when called for, and so we are expected to infer, assume, presume that because he stole the will he must be her lover. Does it not make your head swim to spin round in this circle of reasoning? In assailing the validity of circumstantial evidence, has he not cut his bridges, burned his ships behind him?

"Gentlemen, fain would I seize this theory were it credible, and setting thereon, as in an ark, this most unfortunate prisoner, float her safely through the deluge of ruin, anchor her in peaceful security upon some far-off Ararat; but it has gone to pieces in the hands of its architect. Instead of rescuing the drowning, the wreck serves only to beat her down. If we accept the hypothesis of a lover at all, it will furnish the one missing link in the terrible chain that clanks around the luckless prisoner. The disappearance of the three hundred and twenty dollars has sorely perplexed the prosecution, and unexpectedly the defence offers us the one circumstance we lacked; the lover was lurking in the neighborhood, to learn the result of the visit, to escort her home; and to him the prisoner gave the missing gold, to him intrusted the destruction of the will. If that man came to 'Elm Bluff' prepared to rob and murder, by whom was he incited and instigated; and who was the accessory, and therefore *particeps criminis?* The prisoner's handkerchief

was the medium of chloroforming that venerable old man, and can there be a reasonable doubt that she aided in administering it?

"The prosecution could not explain why she came from the direction of the railroad bridge, which was far out of her way from 'Elm Bluff'; but the defence gives the most satisfactory solution; she was there, dividing her blood-stained spoils with the equally guilty accomplice—her lover. The prosecution brings to the bar of retribution only one criminal; the defence not only fastens the guilt upon this unhappy woman, by supplying the missing links, but proves premeditation, by the person of an accomplice. Four months have been spent in hunting some fact that would tend to exculpate the accused, but each circumstance dragged to light serves only to swell the dismal chorus, 'Woe to the guilty.' To-day she sits in the ashes of desolation, condemned by the unanimous evidence of every known fact connected with this awful tragedy. To oppose this black and frightful host of proofs, what does she offer us? Simply her bare, solemnly reiterated denial of guilt. We hold our breath, hoping against hope that she will give some explanation, some solution, that our pitying hearts are waiting so eagerly to hear; but dumb as the sphinx, she awaits her doom. You will weigh that bare denial in the scale with the evidence, and in this momentous duty recollect the cautious admonition that has been furnished to guide you: 'Conceding that asseverations of innocence are always deserving of consideration by the executive, what is there to invest them with a conclusive efficacy, in opposition to a chain of presumptive evidence, the force and weight of which falls short only of mathematical demonstration?' The astute and eloquent counsel for defence, has cited some well-known cases, to shake your faith in the value of merely presumptive proof.

"I offer for your consideration, an instance of the fallibility of merely bare, unsupported denial of guilt, on the part of the accused. A priest at Lauterbach was suspected, arrested and tried for the murder of a woman; under very aggravated circumstances. He was subjected to eighty examinations; and each time solemnly denied the crime. Even when confronted at

midnight with the skull of the victim murdered eight years before, he vehemently protested his innocence; called on the skull to declare him not the assassin, and appealed to the Holy Trinity to proclaim his innocence. Finally he confessed his crime; testified that while cutting the throat of his victim, he had exhorted her to repentance, had given her absolution, and that having concealed the corpse, he had said masses for her soul.

"The forlorn and hopeless condition of the prisoner at this bar, appeals pathetically to that compassion which we are taught to believe coexists with justice, even in the omnipotent God we worship; yet in the face of incontrovertible facts elicited from reliable witnesses, of coincidences which no theory of accident can explain, can we stifle convictions, solely because she pleads 'not guilty'? Pertinent, indeed, was the ringing cry of that ancient prosecutor: 'Most illustrious Cæsar! if denial of guilt be sufficient defence, who would ever be convicted?' You have been assured that inferences drawn from probable facts eclipse the stupendous falsehood of Ananias and Sapphira! Then the same family strain inevitably crops out, in the loosely-woven web of defensive presumptive evidence—whose pedigree we trace to the same parentage. God forbid that I should commit the sacrilege of arrogating His divine attribute—infallibility—for any human authority, however exalted; or claim it for any amount of proof, presumptive or positive. 'It is because humanity even when most cautious and discriminating is so mournfully fallible and prone to error, that in judging its own frailty, we require the aid and reverently invoke the guidance of Jehovah.' In your solemn deliberations bear in mind this epitome of an opinion, entitled to more than a passing consideration: 'Perhaps strong circumstantial evidence in cases of crime, committed for the most part in secret, is the most satisfactory of any from whence to draw the conclusion of guilt; for men may be seduced to perjury, by many base motives; but it can scarcely happen that many circumstances, especially if they be such over which the accuser could have no control, forming altogether the links of a transaction, should all unfortunately con-

cur to fix the presumption of guilt on an individual, and yet such a conclusion be erroneous.'

"Gentlemen of the jury: the prosecution believes that the overwhelming mass of evidence laid before you proves, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the prisoner did premeditatedly murder and rob Robert Luke Darrington; and in the name of justice, we demand that you vindicate the majesty of outraged law, by rendering a verdict of 'guilty.' All the evidence in this case points the finger of doom at the prisoner, as to the time, the place, the opportunity, the means, the conduct and the motive. Suffer not sympathy for youthful womanhood and wonderful beauty, to make you recreant to the obligations of your oath, to decide this issue of life or death, strictly in accordance with the proofs presented; and bitterly painful as is your impending duty, do not allow the wail of pity to drown the demands of justice, or the voice of that blood that cries to heaven for vengeance upon the murderess. May the righteous God who rules the destinies of the universe guide you, and enable you to perform faithfully your awful duty."

Painfully solemn was the profound silence that pervaded the court-room, and the eyes of the multitude turned anxiously to the grave countenance of the Judge. Mr. Dunbar had seated himself at a small table, not far from Beryl, and resting his elbow upon it, leaned his right temple in the palm of his hand, watching from beneath his contracted black brows the earnest, expectant faces of the jurymen; and his keen, glowing eyes indexed little of the fierce, wolfish pangs that gnawed ceaselessly at his heart, as the intolerable suspense drew near its end.

Judge Parkman leaned forward.

"Gentlemen of the jury: Before entering that box, as the appointed ministers of justice, to arbitrate upon the most momentous issue that can engage human attention—the life or death of a fellow creature—you called your Maker to witness that you would divest your minds of every shadow of prejudice, would calmly, carefully, dispassionately consider, analyze and weigh the evidence submitted for your investigation; and irrespective of consequences, render a verdict in strict accordance with the proofs presented. You have

listened to the testimony of the witnesses, to the theory of the prosecution, to the theory of the counsel for the defence; you have heard the statement of the accused, her repeated denial of the crime with which she stands charged; and finally you have heard the arguments of counsel, the summing up of all the evidence. The peculiar character of some of the facts presented as proof, requires on your part the keenest and most exhaustive analysis of the inferences to be drawn from them, and you 'have need of patience, wisdom and courage.' While it is impossible that you can contemplate the distressing condition of the accused without emotions of profound compassion, your duty 'is prescribed by the law, which allows you no liberty to indulge any sentiment, inconsistent with its strict performance.' You should begin with the legal presumption that the prisoner is innocent, and that presumption must continue, until her guilt is satisfactorily proved. This is the legal right of the prisoner; contingent on no peculiar circumstances of any particular case, but is the common right of every person accused of a crime. The law surrounds the prisoner with a coat of mail, that only irrefragable proofs of guilt can pierce, and the law declares her innocent, unless the proof you have heard on her trial satisfies you, beyond a reasonable doubt, that she is guilty. What constitutes reasonable doubt, it becomes your duty to earnestly and carefully consider. It is charged that the defendant, on the night of the twenty-sixth of October, did wilfully, deliberately and premeditatedly murder Robert Luke Darrington, by striking him with a brass andiron. The legal definition of murder is the unlawful killing of another, with malice aforethought; and is divided into two degrees. Any murder committed knowingly, intentionally and wantonly, and without just cause or excuse, is murder in the first degree; and this is the offence charged against the prisoner at the bar. If you believe from the evidence, that the defendant, Beryl Brentano, did at the time and place named, wilfully and premeditatedly kill Robert Luke Darrington, then it will become your duty to find the defendant guilty of murder; if you do not so believe, then it will be your duty to acquit her. A copy of the legal definition of homicide,

embracing murder in the first and second degrees, and of manslaughter in the first and second degrees, will be furnished for your instruction; and it is your right and privilege after a careful examination of all the evidence, to convict of a lesser crime than that charged in the indictment, provided all the evidence in this case, should so convince your minds, to the exclusion of a reasonable doubt.

"In your deliberations you will constantly bear in memory, the following long established rules provided for the guidance of jurors:

"'I.—The burden of proof rests upon the prosecution, and does not shift or change to the defendant in any phase or stage of the case.

"'II.—Before the jury can convict the accused, they must be satisfied from the evidence that she is guilty of the offence charged in the indictment, beyond a reasonable doubt. It is not sufficient that they should believe her guilt only probable. No degree of probability merely, will authorize a conviction; but the evidence must be of such character and tendency as to produce a moral certainty of the prisoner's guilt, to the exclusion of reasonable doubt.

"'III.—Each fact which is necessary in the chain of circumstances to establish the guilt of the accused, must be distinctly proved by competent legal evidence, and if the jury have reasonable doubt as to any material fact, necessary to be proved in order to support the hypothesis of the prisoner's guilt, to the exclusion of every other reasonable hypothesis, they must find her not guilty.

"'IV.—If the jury are satisfied from the evidence, that the accused is guilty of the offence charged, beyond reasonable doubt, and no rational hypothesis or explanation can be framed or given (upon the whole evidence in the cause) consistent with the innocence of the accused, and at the same time consistent with the facts proved, they ought to find her guilty. The jury are the exclusive judges of the evidence, of its weight, and of the credibility of the witnesses. It is their duty to accept and be governed by the law, as given by the Court in its instructions.'

"The evidence in this case is not direct and positive, but presumptive; and your attention has been called

to some well known cases of persons convicted of, and executed for capital crimes, whose entire innocence was subsequently made apparent. These arguments and cases only prove that, 'all human evidence, whether it be positive or presumptive in its character, like everything else that partakes of mortality, is fallible. The reason may be as completely convinced by circumstantial—as by positive evidence, and yet may possibly not arrive at the truth by either.'

"The true question, therefore, for your consideration, is not the kind of evidence in this case, but it is, what is the result of it in your minds? If it has failed to satisfy you of the guilt of the accused, and your minds are not convinced, vacillate in doubt, then you must acquit her, be the evidence what it may, positive or presumptive; but if the result of the whole evidence satisfies you, if you are convinced that she is guilty, then it is imperatively your duty to convict her, even if the character of the evidence be wholly circumstantial.' Such is the law.

"In resigning this case to you, I deem it my duty to direct your attention to one point, which I suggest that you consider. If the accused administered chloroform, did it indicate that her original intention was solely to rob the vault? Is the act of administering the chloroform consistent with the theory of deliberate and premeditated murder? In examining the facts submitted by counsel, take the suggestion just presented, with you, and if the facts and circumstances proved against her, can be accounted for on the theory of intended, deliberate robbery, without necessarily involving premeditated murder, it is your privilege to put that merciful construction upon them.

"Gentlemen of the jury, I commit this mournful and terrible case to your decision; and solemnly adjure you to be governed in your deliberations, by the evidence as you understand it, by the law as furnished in these instructions, and to render such verdict, as your reason compels, as your matured judgment demands, and your conscience unhesitatingly approves and sanctions. May God direct and control your decision."

Drifting along the stream of testimony that rolled in front of the jury-box, an eager and excited

public had with scarcely a dissenting voice arrived at the conclusion, that the verdict was narrowed to the limits of only two possibilities. It was confidently expected that the jury would either acquit unconditionally, or fail to agree; thus prolonging suspense, by a mistrial. It was six o'clock when the jurors, bearing the andiron, handkerchief, pipe, and a diagram of the bedroom at "Elm Bluff," were led away to their final deliberation; yet so well assured was the mass of spectators, that they would promptly return to render a favorable verdict, that despite the inclemency of the weather, there was no perceptible diminution of the anxious crowd of men and women.

The night had settled prematurely down, black and stormy; and though the fury of the gale seemed at one time to have spent itself, the wind veered to the implacable east, and instead of fitful gusts, a steady roaring blast freighted with rain smote the darkness. The officer conducted his prisoner across the dim corridor, and opened the door of the small anteroom which frequent occupancy had rendered gloomily familiar.

"I wish I could make you more comfortable, and it is a shame to shut you up in such an ice-box. I will throw my overcoat on the floor, and you can wrap your feet up in it. Yes, you must take it. I shall keep warm at the stove in the Sheriff's room. The Judge will not wait later than ten o'clock, then I'll take you back to Mrs. Singleton. It seems you prefer to remain here alone."

"Yes, entirely alone."

"You are positive, you won't try a little hot punch, or a glass of wine?"

"Thank you, but I wish only to be alone."

"Don't be too down-hearted. You will never be convicted under that indictment, at least not by this jury, for I have a suspicion that there is one man among them, who will stand out until the stars fall, and I will tell you why. I happened to be looking at him, when your Christmas card was shown by Mr. Dunbar. The moment he saw it, he started, stretched out his hand, and as he looked at it, I saw him choke up, and pass his hand over his eyes. Soon after Christmas, that man lost his only child, a girl five

years old, who had scarlet fever. To divert her mind, they gave her a Christmas card to play with, that some friend had sent to her mother. She had it in her hand when she died, in convulsions, and it was put in her coffin and buried with her. My wife helped to nurse and shroud her, and she told me it was the card shown in court; it was your card. The law can't cut out the heartstrings of the jury, and I don't believe that man would lift his hand against your life, any sooner than he would strike the face of his dead child."

He locked the door, and Beryl found herself at last alone, in the dreary little den where a single gas burner served only to show the surrounding cheerlessness. The furniture comprised a wooden bench along the wall, two chairs, and a table in the middle of the floor; and on the dusty panes of the grated window, a ray of ruddy light from a lamp post in the street beneath, broke through the leaden lances of the rain, and struggled for admission.

The neurotic pharmacopœia contains nothing so potent as despair to steady quivering nerves, and steel to superhuman endurance. For Beryl, the pendulum of suspense had ceased to swing, because the spring of hope had snapped; and the complete surrender, the mute acceptance of the worst possible to come, had left her numb, impervious to dread. As one by one the discovered facts spelled unmistakably the name of her brother, allowing no margin to doubt his guilt, the necessity of atonement absorbed every other consideration; and the desire to avert his punishment extinguished the last remnant of selfish anxiety. If by suffering in his stead, she could secure to him life—the opportunities of repentance, of expiation, of making his peace with God, of saving his immortal soul—how insignificant seemed all else. The innate love of life, the natural yearning for happiness, the once fervent aspirations for fame—the indescribable longing for the fruition of youth's high hopes, which like a Siren sang somewhere in the golden mists of futurity—all these were now crushed beyond recognition in the whirlwind that had wrecked her.

Her father slept under silvery olives in a Tuscan dell, her mother within hearing of the waves that broke on the Atlantic shore; and if the wanderer could be

purified by penitential tears, what mattered the shattering of the family circle on earth, when in the eternal Beyond, it would be indissolubly reformed? Over the black gulf that yawned in her young, pure life, the wings of her Christian faith bore her steadily, unwaveringly to the heavenly rest, that she knew remained for the people of God, and so, she seemed to have shaken hands with the things of time and earth, and to stand on the border land, girded for departure. To meet her beloved dead, with the blessed announcement that Bertie must join them after a while, because she had ransomed his precious soul; and that the family would be complete under the heavenly roof, was recompense so rich, that the fangs of disgrace, of physical and mental torture were effectually extracted. By day and by night the ladder of prayer lifted her soul into that serene realm, where the fountains of balm are never drained; and into her face stole the reflection of that peace which only communion with the Christian's God can bring to those whom grief has claimed for its own.

To-night, as she listened to the Coronach chanted by the gale, and the dismal accompaniment of the pelting rain, she realized how utterly isolated was her position, and kneeling on the bare floor, crossed her arms on the table, bowed her head upon them, and prayed for patience and strength. The ordeal had been fiery, but the end was at hand, and release must be near.

She heard quick steps in the corridor, and the key was turned in the lock. Had the jury so promptly decided to destroy her? For an instant only, she shut her eyes; and when she opened them, Mr. Dunbar was leaning over her, folding closely about her shoulders some heavy wrap, whose soft fur collar his fingers buttoned around her throat. She had not known that she was cold, until the delicious sensation of warmth crept like a caressing touch over her chilled limbs. She did not stir, and neither spoke; but after a moment he turned toward the door; then she rose.

"There is something I wish to say, and this is my last opportunity, as after to-night we shall not meet again. During the past four months I have said harsh, bitter things to you, and have unjustly judged you. In grateful recognition of all that you have so faithfully

essayed to accomplish in my behalf, I ask you now to forget everything but my gratitude for your effort to save me; and I offer my hand to you, as the one friend who sacrificed even his manly pride, and endured humiliation in order to redress my wrongs. I thank you very sincerely, Mr. Dunbar."

He took her outstretched hand, pressed it against his cheek, his eyes, held it to his lips; then a half smothered groan escaped him, and afraid to trust himself, he went quickly out.

Believing that she stood on the confines of another world, she had possessed her soul in patience, waiting for the consummation of the sacrifice; yet at the crisis of her fate, that singular, incomprehensible influence, long resisted, drew her thoughts to him, whom she regarded as the chosen puppet of destiny to hurry her into an untimely grave. She had fought the battle with him, under fearful odds; conscious of sedition in the heart that defied him, warily clutching with one hand the throat of rebellion in her citadel, while with the other, she parried assault.

Keeping lonely vigil, amid the strewn wreck of life and hope, she had waved away one persistent thought, that lit up the blackness with a sudden glory, that came with the face of an angel of light, and babbled with the silvery tongue of sorcery. As far as her future was concerned, this world had practically come to a premature end; but above the roar of ruin, and out of the yawning graves of slaughtered possibilities, rose and rang the challenge: If she had never come South, if she could have been allowed the chance of happiness that seemed every woman's birthright, if she had met and known Mr. Dunbar, before he was pledged to another; what then? If she were once more the Beryl of old, and he were free? If? What necromancy so wonderful, as the potentiality of if? Weighed in that popular balance—appearances—how stood the poor friendless prisoner, loaded with suspicion, tarnished with obloquy, on the verge of an ignominious death; in comparison with the fair, proud heiress, dowered with blue blood, powerful in patrician influence, rich in all that made her the envy of her social world?

In the dazzling zenith of temporal prosperity, Leo

Gordon considered the heart of her betrothed her most precious possession; the one jewel which she would gladly have given all else to preserve; and yet, fate tore it from her grasp, and laid it at the feet, nay thrust it into the white hand of the woman who must die for a fiendish crime. A latter-day seer tells us, that in all realms, "Between laws there is no analogy, there is Continuity;" then in the universe of ethical sociology, who shall trace the illimitable ramifications of the Law of Compensation?

Up and down, back and forth, slowly, wearily walked the prisoner; and when the town clock struck eight, she mechanically counted each stroke. As in drowning men, the landmarks of a lifetime rise, huddle, almost press upon the glazing eyes, so the phantasmagoria of Beryl's past, seemed projected in strange luminousness upon the pall of the present, like profiles in silvery flame cast on a black curtain.

Holding her father's hand, she walked in the Odenwald; sitting beside her mother on a carpet of purple vetches, she stemmed strawberries in a garden near Pistoja; clinging to Bertie's jacket, she followed him across dimpling sands to dip her feet in the blue Mediterranean waves, that broke in laughter, showing teeth of foam, where dying sunsets reddened all the beach. Through sunny arcades, flushed with pomegranate glowing with orange, silvered with lemon blossoms, came the tinkling music of contadini bells, the bleating of kids, the twittering of happy birds, the distant chime of an Angelus; all the subtle harmony, the fragmentary melody that flickers through an Impromptu of Chopin or Schubert. She saw the simulacrum of her former self, the proud, happy Beryl of old, singing from the score of the "Messiah," in the organ loft of a marble church; she heard the rich tenor voice of her handsome brother, as he trilled a *barcărole* one night, crossing the Atlantic; she smelled the tuberoses at Mentone, the faint breath of lilies, her father had loved so well, and then, blotting all else, there rose clear as some line of Morghen's, that attic room; the invalid's bed, the low chair beside it, the wasted figure, the suffering, fever-flushed face of the beloved mother, as she saw her last, with the *Grand Duke* jasmine fastened at her throat.

The door was thrown open, and the officer beckoned her to follow him. Back into the crowded court-room where people pressed even into the window sills for standing room, where Judge and counsel sat gravely expectant; where the stillness of death had suddenly fallen. The officers conducted her to the bar, then drew back, and Mr. Dunbar came and stood at her side, resting his hand on the back of her chair.

In that solemn hush, the measured tramp of the jury advancing, and filing into their box, had the mournful measured beat as of pall bearers, keeping step to a dismal dirge; and when the foreman laid upon the table the fatal brass unicorn, the muffled sound seemed ominous as the grating of a coffin lowered upon the cross bars of a gaping grave. As the roll was called, each man rose, and answered in a low but distinct tone. Then the clerk of the court asked:

"Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We have," replied the foreman.

"What say you! Guilty, or not guilty?"

Beryl had risen, and the gaslight shining full upon her pale, Phidian face, showed no trace of trepidation. Only the pathetic patience of a sublime surrender was visible on the frozen features; the eyes preternaturally large and luminous were raised far above the sea of heads, and their strained gaze might almost have been fixed upon the unveiled face of the God she trusted. Her hands were folded over her mother's ring, her noble head thrown proudly back.

"We the jury, in the case of the State against Beryl Brentano, find defendant not guilty as charged in the indictment; but guilty of manslaughter in the first degree, and we do earnestly commend her to the mercy of the Court."

The girl staggered slightly, as if recoiling from a blow, and Mr. Dunbar caught her arm, steadied her. The long pent tide of popular feeling broke its barriers, and the gates of Pandemonium seemed to swing open. Women sobbed; men groaned. In vain the Judge thundered "Silence," "Order!" and not until an officer advanced to obey the command, to clear the court-room, was there any perceptible lull, in the storm of indignation.

Turning to the Judge, Mr. Dunbar said:

"In behalf of the prisoner, I most respectfully beg that the Court will end her suspense; and render her return to this bar unnecessary by promptly pronouncing sentence."

"Is it the wish of the prisoner, that sentence should not be delayed?"

"She wishes to know her fate."

She had uttered no sound, but the lashes trembled, fell over the tired, aching, strained eyes; and lifting her locked hands she bowed her chin upon them.

Some moments elapsed, before Judge Parkman spoke; then his voice was low and solemn.

"Beryl Brentano, you have been indicted for the deliberate and premeditated murder of your grandfather, Robert Luke Darrington. Twelve men, selected for their intelligence and impartiality, have patiently and attentively listened to the evidence in this case, and have under oath endeavored to discover the truth of this charge. You have had the benefit of a fair trial, by unbiased judges, and finally, the jury in the conscientious discharge of their duty, have convicted you of manslaughter in the first degree, and commended you to the mercy of the Court. In consideration of your youth, of the peculiar circumstances surrounding you, and especially, in deference to the wishes and recommendation of the jury—whose verdict, the Court approves, I therefore pronounce upon you the lightest penalty which the law affixes to the crime of manslaughter, of which you stand convicted; which sentence is—that you be taken hence to the State Penitentiary, and there be kept securely, for the term of five years."

With a swift movement, Mr. Dunbar drew the crape veil over her face, put her arm through his, and led her into the corridor. Hurriedly he exchanged some words in an undertone with the two officers, who accompanied him to the rear entrance of the court-house; and then, in answer to a shrill whistle, a close carriage drawn by two horses drew up to the door, followed by the dismal equipage set apart for the transportation of prisoners. The deputy sheriff stepped forward, trying to shield the girl from the driving rain, and assisted her into the carriage. Mr. Dunbar sprang in and seated him-

self opposite. The officer closed the door, ordered the coachman to drive on, and then entering the gloomy black box, followed closely, keeping always in sight of the vehicle in advance.

The clock striking ten, sounded through the muffling storm a knell as mournful as some tolling bell, while into that wild, moaning Friday night, went the desolate woman, wearing henceforth the brand of Cain—remanded to the convict's home.

She had thrown back her veil to ease the stifling sensation in her throat, and Mr. Dunbar could see now and then, as they flashed past a street lamp, that she sat upright, still as stone.

At last she said, in a tone peculiarly calm, like that of one talking in sleep:

"What did it mean—that verdict?"

"That you went back to 'Elm Bluff' with no intention of attacking General Darrington.'

"That I went there deliberately to steal, and then to avoid detection, killed him? That was the verdict of the jury?"

She waited a moment.

"Answer me. That was the meaning? That was the most merciful verdict they could give to the world?"

Only the hissing sound of the rain upon the glass pane of the carriage, made reply.

They had reached the bridge, when a hysterical laugh startled the man, who leaned back on the front seat, with his arms crossed tightly over a heart throbbing with almost unendurable pain.

"To steal, to rob, to plunder. Branded for all time a thief, a rogue, a murderess. I!—I—"

A passionate wail told the strain was broken: "I, my father's darling, my father's Beryl! Hurled into a living tomb, herded with convicts, with the vilest outcasts that disgrace the earth—this is worse than a thousand deaths! It would have been so merciful to crush out the life they mangled; but to doom me to the slow torture of this loathsome grave, where death brings no release! To die is so easy, so blessed; but to live—a convicted felon! O, my God! my God! Hast Thou indeed forsaken me?"

In the appalling realization of her fate, she rocked

to and fro for a moment only, fiercely shaken by the horror of a future never before contemplated. Then the proud soul stifled its shuddering sigh, lifted its burden of shame, silently struggled up its awful *Via Crucis*. Mute and still, she leaned back in the corner of the carriage.

"I could have saved you, but you would not accept deliverance. You thwarted every effort, tied the hands that might have set you free; and by your own premeditated course throughout the trial, deliberately dragged this doom down upon your head. You counted the cost, and you elected, chose of your own free will to offer yourself as a sacrifice, to the law, for the crime of another. You are your own merciless fate, decreeing self-immolation. You were willing to die in order to save that man's life; and you can certainly summon fortitude to endure five years' deprivation of his society; sustained by the hope that having thereby purchased his security, you may yet reap the reward your heart demands, reunion with its worthless, degraded idol. I have watched, weighed, studied you; searched every stray record of your fair young life, found the clear pages all pure; and I have doubted, marvelled that you, lily-hearted, lily-souled, lily-handed, could cast the pearl of your love down in the mire, to be trampled by swinish feet."

The darkness of the City of Dis that seemed to brood under the wings of the stormy night, veiled Beryl's face; and her silence goaded him beyond the limits of prudence, which he had warily surveyed for himself.

"Day and night, I hear the maddening echo of your accusing cry, 'You have ruined my life!' God knows, you have as effectually ruined mine. You have your revenge—if it comfort you to know it; but I am incapable of your sublime renunciation. I am no patient martyr; I am, instead, an intensely selfish man. You choose to hug the ashes of desolation; I purpose to sweep away the wreck, to rebuild on the foundation of one hope, which all the legions in hell cannot shake. Between you and me the battle has only begun, and nothing but your death or my victory will end it. You have your revenge; I intend to enjoy mine. Though he burrow as a mole, or skulk in some fastness of Alaska, I will track and seize that cowardly miscreant,

and when the law receives its guilty victim, you shall be freed from suspicion, freed from prison, and most precious of all boons, you shall be freed forever from the vile contamination of his polluting touch. For the pangs you have inflicted on me, I will have my revenge: you shall never be profaned by the name of wife."

Up the rocky hill toiled the horses, arching their necks as they stooped their faces to avoid the blinding rain; and soon the huge blot of prison walls, like a crouching monster ambushed in surrounding gloom, barred the way.

In two windows of the second story, burned lights that borrowed lurid rays in their passage through the mist, and seemed to glow angrily, like the red eyes of a sullen beast of prey. The carriage stopped. A moment after, the deputy-sheriff sprang from his wagon and rang the bell close to the great gate. Two dogs bayed hoarsely, and somewhere in the building an answering bell sounded.

Beryl leaned forward.

"Mr. Dunbar, there is one last favor I ask at your hands. I want my—my—I want that pipe, that was shown in court. Will you ask that it may be given to me? Will you send it to me?"

A half strangled, scarcely audible oath was his only reply.

She put out her hand, laid it on his.

"You have caused me so much suffering, surely you will not deny me this only recompense I shall ever ask."

His hand closed over hers.

"If I bring it to you, will you confess who smoked it last?"

"After to-night, sir, I think it best I should never see your face again."

The officer opened the carriage door, the warden approached, carrying a lantern in one hand and an umbrella in the other. Mr. Dunbar stepped from the carriage and turning, stretched out his arms, suddenly snatched the girl for an instant close to his heart, and lifted her to the ground.

The warden opened the gate, swinging his lantern high to light the way, and by its flickering rays Lennox

Dunbar saw the beautiful white face, the wonderful, sad eyes, the wan lips contracted by a spasm of pain.

She turned and followed the warden; the lights wavered; the great iron gate swung back in its groove, the bolt fell with a sullen clang; the massive key rattled, a chain clanked, and all was darkness as she was locked irrevocably into her living tomb.

"N A N."

BY

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

Cordially Yours
Louise Chandler Moulton

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

LOUISE CHANDLER was born in Pomfret, Conn., in 1836. She was educated at the famous seminary in Troy, N. Y., then conducted by Mrs. Emma Willard. Her tendency towards the profession of letters developed itself very early. At fifteen she was already an authoress, writing short stories under the *nom de plume* of "Ellen Louise." Her first book published in 1854, "This, That and the Other," proved very successful; thus before she was twenty she found herself fairly launched in the swiftly growing tide of fictitious literature. Other stories and essays rapidly followed. "Juno Clifford" was a full-grown novel, which was published anonymously in New York in 1855. A volume of poems published in Boston had preceded this work. A collection of short stories with the odd title of "My Third Book" appeared in 1859. In 1873 appeared the first volume of "Bedtime Stories" adapted for children; this was published in Boston as were most of those which succeeded it. In 1874 came the novel "Some Women's Hearts": then another volume of the "Bedtime Stories" in 1875 with the literalistic title, "Some More Bedtime Stories." Next a volume of poems in 1877; and the succeeding year "Swallow Flights and Other Poems." Then another book for the little ones called "New Bedtime stories," in 1880; "Random Rambles," in 1881; "Firelight Stories" in 1883; and "Ourselves and Our Neighbors," in 1887; in the same year she also edited, and prefaced with a biographical sketch, the "Golden Secrets of Phillip Bourke Marston.

In 1855 Miss Chandler married Mr. William U. Moulton, who was also a *litterateur* and publisher in Boston. Mrs. Moulton was for some time Boston correspondent for the New York *Tribune*, and when in Europe occasionally wrote letters on literary and social

topics for that and other papers from London and Paris. Mrs. Moulton is a delightful writer for children—tender and sweet, with always a moral aim intended to rouse the conscience of the little folks against their besetting sins and childish weaknesses; but with nothing of the didactic in style so repellent to many young readers. In her stories for children of a larger growth Mrs. Moulton develops a very decided tendency to instruct by induction; one cannot escape from the inferences intended to be drawn, and certainly one idea stands out very prominently in a number of her stories and it is one which experience teaches all close observers of mental and moral phenomena, namely, that Nature always punishes human mistakes with as much certainty and precision as she does wilful crimes.

As a poet Mrs. Moulton displays that fine love of natural objects which appears to be inseparable from the poetic instinct, and the didactic tendency in some of her prose works entirely disappears when she sings out her thoughts, her loves, her fancies, in melodious verse.

"NAN."

A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

"I hate it all, oh, *how* I hate it!"

It was Nan Allen who made this outburst, sitting in the comfortable "sitting-room" of a New England farm-house, and rocking to-and-fro in a New England rocking-chair. Considering how the world wags in general, and that one of our greatest statisticians has told us that one in seven of the inhabitants of Great Britain dies a pauper, it would not seem to a well-regulated mind that Nan had much to complain of. It was late in October. The "fall-cleaning" was over —stoves were set-up in the many rooms of Farmer Allen's house, cleanliness reigned, and the warmth within defied the menaces of the "hard winter" which every one was predicting.

The look of homely well-being, without one ray of beauty to brighten it, made foolish Nan's very heart sick. The close heat of the air-tight stove went to her head, and she sighed, as she wondered what life meant. Others besides herself wondered what Nan Allen's life meant. She was a conundrum, which so far no one had taken the trouble to guess, though we have all seen other such conundrums in plenty. She was the daughter of parents without one ray of imagination. She had grown up in a home where the "Evangelical Family Library" did duty for literature, and Fox's "Book of Martyrs" was the nearest approach to a romance. And yet Nan was a beauty-lover and a dreamer. I doubt if under the most favoring circumstances she could have written a book or painted a picture. Hers was the sympathetic, not the creative, imagination; still the love of beauty had been

born in her. Starved into silence by her circumstances, it ached on her heart.

As a child she had been content with the sunsets that burned the western hills, the roses that rioted in the old garden in June, the sturdy autumn-flowers that lifted their haughty, handsome heads to face the November blasts. She had been what the New England people called a romp; that is, she had climbed trees, and roamed far afield after berries, tamed squirrels, and coasted down-hill when the winter had glazed the hillsides with snow and ice. Occupied with these pleasures she had failed to realize the barrenness of her home life—the utter want of grace and beauty in all its appointments. But one day the bud becomes a flower, and one day Nan ceased to be a child. Then her life confronted her just as it was—barren and narrow and monotonous, and with no apparent hope of better days. And in the summer just past she had made a friend, who had opened to her a glimpse of another world. A girl not much older than Nan herself had been sent to Ryefield to board. Miss Amory was not very strong, and while her mother had led forth two older daughters to the glories of conquest at Saratoga and afterwards at Newport, the family-doctor had decreed for Blanche a quiet summer, and had persuaded a brother physician at Ryefield to take her into his family.

In some of Miss Amory's walks she had met Nan Allen, and suddenly they had become friends. Blanche Amory, with her patrician grace, her fair face and her perfect toilets, had dawned on Nan as a revelation of what life might be. It seemed as if her very dreams had taken shape. She surrendered herself heart and soul to the new-comer. Miss Amory, in turn, was delighted with Nan, in something the same way in which she might have enjoyed an unaccustomed school of art, a fresh musical sensation, a new country to travel in.

She had never before seen anything like this girl, so frank, so honest, so humble yet so proud, so appreciative yet so ignorant, so well-bred yet so unaccustomed to society. Miss Amory from Boston, used to all things and tired of most, read this new page of human nature with ever-fresh delight.

From this young high-priestess of the proper, quick-witted Nan caught speedily the jargon of art and of society. She had longed vaguely, hitherto, for something other than she had known. Now her desires defined themselves; for she learned what she ought to wish for. Her very soul hungered within her for pictures and carvings and Turkish rugs and old china, and the other things which all seemed common and necessary as daily bread to the girl from Boston.

Nan used to wonder how Miss Amory would endure life at Ryefield when the short, cold days should come and a wildwood, moss-carpeted drawing-room was no longer among the possibilities. Would this patrician creature be able to endure the things Nan's own soul loathed? Happily the fair Blanche was spared the ordeal. While still September days were keeping the world warm, Miss Amory's oldest brother came to take her away from Ryefield.

Of course Nan Allen saw her friend's brother, and in Quincy Amory she, a second time, discovered that her unformed ideal had taken shape. This, then, was what a man should be—so polished, so graceful and with such clothes! It might be inglorious, she owned to herself, to consider the clothes; but after all, they were a revelation, and they, as much as his intonation, and his walk emphasized the difference between Boston and Ryefield. He was very gracious to Nan—for his sister's sake, no doubt—but he could not help knowing that she was a pretty girl, a far prettier girl, if the truth must be told, than even Blanche Amory.

Miss Amory was a blonde, tall, slight, with clear blue eyes, well-cut features and reposeful manners—a kind of human Easter lily. Nan was a spicy rose, thorny, perhaps, but fragrant and provoking, with her dark, curling hair, her dark, bright eyes, her petite figure, her red lips and her cheeks like the sunny side of a peach. Quincy Amory quite shared his sister's regret when they bade bonny Nan good-bye at the Ryefield station.

That parting was a month ago, and meantime October frosts had chilled the air, and the vivid autumn leaves had blown down with the gale, and Mrs. Allen and her maid-of-all-work had done the fall cleaning, and here, in the midst of all the comfortable, common-

place, unbeautiful surroundings which her soul loathed, sat Nan. How she hated the rag-carpet on the floor, and the mats braided out of the old clothes which could do duty as garments no longer, and the kerosene lamps, round which their betraying odor always lingered, and the air-tight stove, and the mottoes wrought in worsted work that hung upon the wall. Was it a sin to hate it all, she wondered? Here, to be sure, here and not elsewhere, her lot had been cast, and it might be that she ought to be grateful for it.

"No, that is too much," she said aloud. "Patient, if you like; but grateful!"

And just then John Payne came in. I have not mentioned John, because Nan had thought so very little about him during the past summer. And yet he had been a part of her life ever since she could remember. When she went to the district school John, three or four years older than herself, had been her companion. John had brought her fruit and flowers, and guided her sled when she coasted, and waited on her whims like a faithful dog; and she had taken all John's services as simply and as much as if they were a matter of right, as she ate her breakfast. But when Miss Amory came into her life John went out of it. She had no need of him, then; and he had been very busy all summer, and was wise enough besides to know when not to intrude.

But now he came in, in the October afternoon, to say something which he began to think he had left unsaid too long. He had entered by the back way, and had seen that Mrs. Allen was in the depths of sweet pickles. He was therefore not likely to be interrupted. Here sat Nan, piquant, wilful, dark-eyed, rose-sweet Nan, with a look on her face which, to say the least, offered no vantage-ground to sentiment. Something might have whispered to John that the occasion was not favorable—but though he was country bred he was, after all, no coward; and he chose to make his own occasions rather than wait for them. Nan looked up, as he came in, somewhat listlessly.

"Ah! Sit down, John. No doubt the stove will make your head ache. It does mine; but we must get used to it."

John sat down; but the warmth of which he began

to speak was not that of the stove; and suddenly Nan found herself listening with a curious interest, while he told her that he had been in love with her ever since he could remember. Nan was not a self-conscious girl; and she had really never thought of John Payne in this way. She looked curiously at him as he spoke. She had never considered what he was like before. He was a strong, resolute, handsome fellow. There was no denying that he was handsomer than Quincy Amory. But then—his coat! And his hands were hard, and there was—yes, there *was*—the slightest suspicion of what Mr. Amory would have called a Yankee twang in his voice. And as for loving him—why, of course she loved John; she always had, but it was not in that way. If only it had been Quincy Amory!

"Why, I'm sure I don't know, John," she said candidly, when his "winged words" had been spoken. "I never thought of your feeling like *this*. I don't see why you weren't contented to go on just as we always have. That was nice enough, I'm sure."

"Nice enough for you," John answered firmly, "but not for me. It's very little I've seen of you the past summer, and I've found out that I want a good deal more."

Nan shook her curly head and sat for a space deep in consideration.

"I don't seem able to think it out quite so suddenly," she said. "Give me till to-morrow. Only one thing, John; if I said yes, you would have to go away from here."

"Yes?" John said inquiringly.

"Yes, certainly, John. I dislike rag-carpets—I hate braided mats—I loathe air-tight stoves. Life here is stagnation. If I—if what you wish were ever to come to pass, it could not be until after you had made a life for yourself somewhere else. You *are* clever enough for that, aren't you, John?" and she looked him over reflectingly.

"Yes, I believe I am," he answered with a half vexed laugh, for this was not at all like the love scene with his thornless rose which he had pictured to himself. "I had sometimes thought, myself, that I might make a broader life somewhere else, but perhaps I was

too impatient to win my wife to be willing to go away from a certainty, and wait, Heaven knows how long."

"Well, but, John dear, that's the only way you *could* win me. There *is* only one certainty, and that is, that I will *not* live here. Now go away, and I'll try to think it all out by to-morrow night."

"I've been asking Nan to marry me," John said, pausing in the kitchen to speak to Mrs. Allen on the way out.

"You don't say so! Will she?"

"I don't know yet. I shall find out to-morrow."

And John Payne went his way. Mrs. Allen understood Nan well enough not to speak to her—and that night the girl did more serious thinking than she had ever done before. She sent her thoughts back through her seventeen years of life, and she found John Payne all along the way. She was very used to John, certainly. But did she love him? She was not sure. Perhaps she felt all that other girls did who married—and it was only the same thing in her which sighed for impossible rugs and pictures and old china, that cried out now for a more romantic love, a more dazzling lover. Any way, no one but John was likely to love *her*, she thought, and if she ever were to get out of Ryefield, it must be by means of his taking her. With that for a conclusion to her thinking, she went to sleep.

Late in the next afternoon John came again.

"Well?" he said, standing before her and putting out his strong hands.

"Oh, sit down, John—you make me nervous standing there. I've thought it all out. I'm pretty sure I like you well enough; but I can't stay *here*. It must all depend on whether you make a home somewhere else."

John's eyes grew cold, and his lips stiffened a little.

"You mean that you will promise to marry me after I have gone out into the world and won such a measure of success as seems to you worth accepting?"

"Yes, John."

"You are a shrewder young lady than I gave you credit for being, my dear. But you are right enough, no doubt. You hate this narrow life and all its small economies. Why, indeed, then, should you bind yourself to live in it? I have made my plans. I thought

once of studying law, but that is slow business. I have written to-day to Uncle Jared Smith, my mother's brother. He is one of the great merchants of New York, and he has always promised to find me a place with him if I would come. He has no son of his own, and there would be a reasonable chance, if I pleased him, of my being taken into the firm. Would that suit you?"

Nan's eyes fairly danced. New York! Why, that would even be better than Boston.

"Oh, you dear John!" she cried eagerly. "And when will you go?"

"In the latter part of November if Uncle Jared is ready for me then. Are you in such a desperate hurry for me to leave?"

"Oh, John, don't look at me like that. The sooner you go the sooner it will come to pass, won't it?"

And John smiled a little grimly, and made up his mind that it was really just as well they were not to be married at present. Perhaps his thorny little sweetheart would care more for him after she had tried for a year or two what life would be without him. Even now she gave him all she had to give. Was it well to complain of a rose-tree because it could not be an oak, especially if one loved the rose?

For the next month all went well. Uncle Jared rejoiced by letter over the prospect of having his nephew with him. All John's arrangements were made for leaving home, and Nan's gay smiles brightened the gloom of the season; for Nan was in love with the prospect of ultimate New York, if with nothing else. And so the time went on until the 21st of November.

On the 23d John Payne was to leave Ryefield. He had talked over his plans with Nan, the night of the 21st, for the hundredth time. She found them a very safe subject; for, long as she had known John, she was very shy of him as a lover, and would rather hear him talk of anything else than that love of his that was so strong and so genuine that it came into her life somewhat like a persistent north wind ruffling a garden of roses. When John went away he held her hand for a long time, and looked deep down into her eyes till she grew petulant, and asked him what he

saw and what was wrong. And John smiled a puzzling smile as he answered:

"Nothing is wrong, I think. What does not exist cannot be wrong. I have got to wait for your heart to be born. I shall come to-morrow night for good-bye."

But long before the next night news had gone abroad in Ryefield, that Ezra Payne, John's father, had been seized with paralysis. At first the doctors had thought there was little hope for his life, but they began to be more cheerful about him after a few hours.

What would this mean to John, Nan wondered. That night of November 23, Nan's father, always a good neighbor, went to watch beside his old friend. The doctor was there also, and John got away and came to Nan.

"This is not good-bye in the sense I expected," he said; "but I suppose it is good-bye in another way, and a long good-bye, too. Nan, have you realized that I must now stay in Ryefield?"

"*Must*, John?"

"Yes, must, even though it should cost me all the joy of my life. I, and no other, must care for my father and fill his place. There is no help. I have thought and thought, and there is no other way. I cannot leave my plain duty undone. But I do not bind you, Nan, to the life of Ryefield. You shall be free."

"And you won't mind?" Nan whispered, timidly.

"Mind!" The word came like a cry from John Payne's lips. Then he held himself in with a strong hand and spoke very quietly. "No, I won't mind. If you mean by that, be angry. I will not blame you. You were honest to me from the first, and we do not look for a rose to bloom in the storms of winter. Good-bye, little Nan, whom I have loved all my life."

There was a deep note in his voice that brought the tears to Nan's eyes. She sat there silently after he was gone, wondering whether, after all, love might not be worth more than some other things, and whether any one else would ever love her as John did.

That very week an unexpected invitation came to

her, to pass two or three months with her summer-friend, Miss Amory. Blanche had not forgotten her, then. Proud and glad as she was of this, she would have been no less so had she known how urgently Quincy Armory had jogged his sister's memory.

Nan was quite used to her own way, and she got it in this instance. A week's time found her at home in the Amory mansion, under the shadow of the dome of the state-house. Blanche's two sisters had gone on a visit to an aunt in Baltimore, and Blanche was lonely enough without them to give Nan an eager welcome. And, now, indeed, Nan felt that she had just begun to live. A grub might feel thus, she fancied, when he first discovered he was a butterfly. Here, in this ancestral home, where British officers had danced stately minuets when Massachusetts was a colony, were all the delights of which Nan had vainly dreamed. Pictures, china, rugs, carvings, old silver, *curios* from every country under the sun—the glory of all the kingdoms of the world! Ah, this it was to live!

Papa Allen had not sent his only child away with an empty purse, and Miss Amory helped to choose the simple yet dainty costumes that made the pretty country-girl ten times prettier. And if Quincy Amory had been touched before by her wild-rose charms, he found them in this new setting yet more beguiling. And since he, the only son of his father, could afford to please himself in marriage, he began to say to himself, "Why not?" Doubtless Nan might have said "Why not?" too, if such a wild thought could ever have crossed her brain, as that this man. to whom she looked up with such unbounded and admiring homage, *could* care for her. To be loved by the most princely man she had ever seen—to live always in this new world of beauty—no, Nan's fancies were not strong-winged enough to soar so high.

But as the weeks went on, and she grew used to luxury, it began to fill her heart not quite so full as at first. Sometimes, in the midst of all the glories that surrounded her, her thoughts went back to Ryefield, and she heard John's voice say once more.

"Good-bye, little Nan, whom I have loved all my life."

Quincy Amory did not ask her to marry him until

she had been his sister's guest for three months. It was the very last day but one in February when, one night, he found that she, a little tired, perhaps, of pleasure, had staid at home instead of going with his sister to a party, as had been planned. Here was his ready made opportunity, of which he availed himself in the most high-bred and polished manner. Perhaps there was an indescribable something in his voice and bearing that brought it home to Nan that he was conferring upon her an extreme distinction, instead of seeking from her, as John Payne had done, the crowning grace and glory of his own life.

If he had made his offer the first month Nan was there, while yet she was dazzled by the splendor and nobility of everything, I have little doubt but that she would have accepted it. Now that she had grown used to things, they had less power over her—and she began, instead of contemplating the glories of Quincy Amory's birth and state, to ask herself if this high-bred, listless young man really loved her. Suddenly she asked the question out loud:

"Are you quite sure you love me, Mr. Amory?"

"*Quite* sure, indeed. *Could* I have any other motive?"

And his words and his tone lent force to her already keen sense, that it was something akin to the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor which this Mayflower-descended young man was proposing to bestow upon her. What imp of the perverse was it that would not let her say yes?

"Please, I must think a little," she answered quietly, just as she had answered John Payne before. "I will tell you to-morrow night."

And Mr. Amory seemed quite at ease. No doubt he approved of the delicacy that would not be too eager. It suited his taste, and even enhanced the girl's value in his eyes. He talked then about indifferent subjects—some new paintings at the Art Museum, the photographs at Doll & Richards' from the pictures of "The Hermitage," a coming performance of the Passion music.

Nan was glad, at last, when she could civilly get away to her own room and think the whole thing over. A soft coal fire was burning in her grate, and it lighted

the luxurious room with its warm, soft hangings, its sleepy-hollow chairs and the dainty writing-table with all its pretty appointments. This was just what Nan longed for—what she had craved dumbly ever since she could remember. She had only to say "Yes" to have it and all it symbolized her own for always. What was the drawback? Why did she hear and hear over and over again, that last good-bye of John's? *Was* it possible that she, too, had loved him all her life—*all* her life—and had never known it until now? Was it because it was another, and not John, who offered them to her, that all the external things she had craved so long seemed to her in this hour of no account? She thought late into the night, and then she slept a fitful sleep, in which she dreamed that John Payne and Quincy Amory were each pulling her, one to the right, the other to the left, and she woke with a little cry on her lips lest she should be torn in two.

The next morning she said to Miss Amory: "I must go home to-morrow. It will be the first day of spring."

And, despite all persuasion, she kept to this resolution. Quincy Amory heard of her purpose with no misgivings. It seemed natural that, after having promised to marry him, she should think it well to go away. Her delicate sense of propriety was one of her charms. He went, without a misgiving, to find her in the library, whither she had betaken herself after dinner.

"Well, my wilful wild-rose," he said gayly, as he took his seat beside her, "are you ready to answer me?"

"Quite ready, Mr. Amory."

He smiled.

"Don't you think you could learn to say Quincy, now?"

"No, Mr. Amory, for I shall have no right."

The careless smile died on his lips, and his eyes looked into hers with a sudden, grave inquiry.

"Do you mean," he said, "that you do not like me?"

"Oh, no, no; I like you so much. I mean only that that is *all*. It is not enough, is it?"

"That depends. Do you care for any one else in that way?"

Sudden blushes turned Nan's face scarlet.

"I'm afraid that *is* it," she said. "I did not know it till last night. It was only when I came to think what it would be to stay away always from Ryefield, that I began to understand what I felt for some one I had known all my life."

"No doubt you are quite right," he said a little stiffly. "Of course you are right, if there is some one else."

The tears gathered in Nan's dark eyes.

"*Don't* be vexed at me," she said humbly and sweetly. "I am not the girl you ought to marry. You should have some one who is used to your world and all the ways of it. As for me—I belong to Ryefield."

The best and noblest side of Quincy Amory came out, then and there. He took Nan's little brown hand and raised it to his lips.

"You are a good, frank, girl," he said, "and you *would* have been the one for me had you loved me. You did not, and it is my loss."

He was so good and gentle that Nan half thought she had made a mistake, even then—but deep down in her heart she knew better; and she went on her way the next day with contentment.

She took the father and mother at home by surprise. They had looked for her in the spring, but not on this first day of it, when March was coming in, keen still with the cold of winter, and wild with turbulent gusts.

"Dear me!" her mother said, using the New England woman's natural form of invocation, "*dear* me, I expect it'll seem pretty strange to you here, now you've got used to gas and furnaces and all kinds of city-fixings."

And the truth was it *did* seem strange, and the rigid, bare, unbeautiful usefulness of everything was not one whit more attractive to beauty loving Nan than of old.

"How's John?" she asked hastily, changing the subject.

"John! Oh, I guess he's pretty well, but he's got his hands full. They say old Mr. Payne's no good at all; but he hasn't any notion o' dyin.' And John tends

him, and sees to his mother, and keeps everything going on the farm; and it's no wonder if he *has* grown thin and looks kind o' worn and peaked like. He's had a hard time doin' *his* duty, John has."

Nan wondered if people always had hard times doing their duty, and secretly concluded that this was probably the case.

How did John Payne know that she had got home? But, somehow, people always did know things in Ryefield, and it was nothing strange that John should come walking in after supper was over. Mrs. Allen was helping her "girl" wash up the dishes. Mr. Allen was helping his "man" do the chores. And Nan sat alone in the sitting-room, where the kerosene lamp did duty for gas, and already the air-tight stove made her head ache. Or, after all, was it not something else and not the stove? Was it that she was regretting a little the lovely, rose-hung, wax-lighted room where she had been wont to sit at this hour and look into the fire? Did she possibly regret that with her own hand she had shut against herself the gate of that Beacon Hill Eden forever?

John came in quietly and saw her before she saw him—saw her with eyes into which grew a strange tenderness. Soon she felt his presence and looked around.

"Oh, John!" she cried, and there was unmistakable gladness in her tone.

"You *are* glad to see me then, even after Boston?"

Nan looked up into his face. The old, loving light was in his eyes. No, he had not changed.

"Come and sit down," she said, "and I'll tell you how I feel after Boston."

John sat down, but he kept his hands quietly before him—those hands that always used to be seeking hers.

"John!"

It was a low tone, with a little quiver of pathos in it.

"John!"

"Yes, Nan."

"I hate rag-carpets."

"Yes, Nan."

"And I hate braided mats and kerosene-lamps and air-tight stoves, and—life as it is in Ryefield. But there's one thing I hate worse yet, John."

"Yes, Nan?" this time with a note of interrogation.

"Yes, I hate worse any life—any life at all—where you can't come in at twilight, and where I'm far, far away from somebody who said he had loved me all my life."

John grew pale suddenly. Watchful Nan saw the color leave his face, and the hands that had not yet sought hers were trembling.

"Nan," he said, "do you quite know what you are saying?"

"Yes, I *quite* know. You see, I *didn't* know last November—but I went away and found out."

And why should I play Paul Pry at the rest of the interview, since after all, the story ends like a fairy-tale, with—"And so they were married?"

A MEMORABLE MURDER.

BY

CELIA THAXTER.

Very truly yours
Celia Thaxter.

CELIA THAXTER.

CELIA THAXTER suddenly broke upon the literary horizon some twelve or fifteen years since, with an interesting collection of poems entitled "Drift-wood," and considering that they came from a group of islands, away from the mainland far enough to prevent frequent communication, the poetical debutant was received with almost as much surprise as pleasure. For though the Isles of Shoals were well known as a delightful sea resort, they had certainly never been regarded as a literary centre, or as a place likely to develop poetical talent. The means of education were comparatively remote, and the permanent society of the islands for the greater part of the year offered very limited resources for a budding genius. True, there had been floating through the current literature for some time stray poems, fragrant with the ozone of old ocean, signed "Celia Thaxter;" still it was difficult for the critical reviewer of Boston to realize that the bearer of this name was actually a long time resident, if not exactly a native of those storm beaten isles lying off the coast of New Hampshire. But when her own autobiography, of her earlier years, appeared in the pages of *St. Nicholas*, the truth was realized at last, that the atmosphere of Cambridge or Beacon Hill was not absolutely necessary to the growth and blooming of the flowers of poesy.

Celia Leighton was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, June 29, 1835, but the family removed soon after to the Isles of Shoals, a group of almost bare rocks, on which the famous lighthouse was for many years the most prominent and attractive object. The gradual addition of summer visitors to the fishing population came slowly, Celia's father being the first to establish anything like a modern hotel. Those who would know how this child of the sea grew up into a

refined and intelligent woman, should read not only her early autobiography, but her pleasant little book, entitled "Among the Isles of Shoals." When quite young, in 1851, Celia Leighton was married to Mr. Thaxter, and has continued to reside, at least for a portion of each year on the principal island of the group, which has been made known through her pen to a far wider circle than would ever have been likely to make the acquaintance of the islands on their own merits.

Mrs. Thaxter has done for the sea-shore and the varied aspects of ocean views and the rocky isles of her home, what Whittier has done for the milder aspects of the river on whose banks he dwelt. As he may be said to have exhausted the descriptive beauties of the Merrimac, Mrs. Thaxter appears to have left nothing unsaid of the varying features of the ocean, whose waves were forever beating at her feet. With the minutest attention to detail; with the keenest observation for shades of difference; with an almost superfine susceptibility to climatic and meteorological changes, so that she might be termed a realist in word-painting, she at the same time possessed the glow and the imagination of the impressionist. Thus we see in her art the happy combination of the two schools. Certainly no one can read her poems without the conviction of certainty that she has seen with her own eyes what she describes. There is something beyond the photographic accuracy of experienced observation always to be observed even in her simplest poems. She sees something more than the mere external forms of nature, and however much she may delight in these, it is not her sole object to reproduce them for other eyes. Beyond and within the external, she perceives the actuating soul: and it is this quality which gives the greatest value to her pictures of sea and shore.

In her prose writing the picturesque prevails, though with some marked exceptions; in all is a moral undercurrent which crops out more or less prominently in all of her productions—prose or poetry. She has written some charming poems for children, with such an exquisite blending of the didactic with the scenic and

emotional, that the intended lesson is conveyed without exciting the natural repulsion of children to "morals," too obviously conveyed.

Because Mrs. Thaxter has written so well of the sea, her graphic imagery has impressed some critics with the idea that she writes of nothing else. This is eminently unjust: her poems are not confined to the sea; as all will remember who have read the story of "A Faded Glove," "Remonstrance," "Piccola," and scores of other verses giving land pictures, and exhibiting some of the finest and most delicate emotions of the human heart; not to mention her musical sonnets on Beethoven and other great masters of composition. Mrs. Thaxter was happy to have attracted, very early in her literary career, the sympathy and admiration of some of the best writers and critics of the day: among the most enthusiastic of her admirers, was Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a scholar of fine penetrating sense, who is also a lover of the sea, and one of the most competent judges of ocean nature painting among our modern literati. He failed to discover any lack of versatility in her genius, and those who study her works as a whole, will find that there is scarcely a moral idea, a practical point in ethics, or an emotion of the human heart, which has not been the subject of her pen, touched upon at least, with more or less freedom.

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A MEMORABLE MURDER.

At the Isles of Shoals, on the 5th of March in the year 1873, occurred one of the most monstrous tragedies ever enacted on this planet. The sickening details of the double murder are well known; the newspapers teemed with them for months: but the pathos of the story is not realized; the world does not know how gentle a life these poor people led, how innocently happy were their quiet days. They were all Norwegians. The more I see of the natives of this far-off land, the more I admire the fine qualities which seem to characterize them as a race. Gentle, faithful, intelligent, God-fearing human beings, they daily use such courtesy toward each other and all who come in contact with them, as puts our ruder Yankee manners to shame. The men and women living on this lonely island were like the sweet, honest, simple folk we read of in Björnson's charming Norwegian stories, full of kindly thoughts and ways. The murdered Anethe might have been the Eli of Björnson's beautiful Arne or the Ragnhild of Boyesen's lovely romance. They rejoiced to find a home just such as they desired in this peaceful place; the women took such pleasure in the little house which they kept so neat and bright, in their flock of hens, their little dog Ringe, and all their humble belongings! The Norwegians are an exceptionally affectionate people; family ties are very strong and precious among them. Let me tell the story of their sorrow as simply as may be.

Louis Wagner murdered Anethe and Karen Christensen at midnight on the 5th of March, two years ago this spring. The whole affair shows the calmness of a practised hand; *there was no malice in the deed*, no heat; it was one of the coolest instances of deliberation ever chronicled in the annals of crime. He admits that these people had shown him nothing but

kindness. He says in so many words, "They were my best friends." They looked upon him as a brother. Yet he did not hesitate to murder them. The island called Smutty-Nose by human perversity (since in old times it bore the pleasanter title of Haley's Island) was selected to be the scene of this disaster. Long ago I lived two years upon it, and know well its whitened ledges and grassy slopes, its low thickets of wild-rose and bayberry, its sea-wall still intact, connecting it with the small island Malaga, opposite Appledore, and the ruined breakwater which links it with Cedar Island on the other side. A lonely cairn, erected by some long ago forgotten fishermen or sailors, stands upon the highest rock at the southeastern extremity; at its western end a few houses are scattered, small, rude dwellings, with the square old Haley house near; two or three fish-houses are falling into decay about the water-side, and the ancient wharf drops stone by stone into the little cove, where every day the tide ebbs and flows and ebbs again with pleasant sound and freshness. Near the houses is a small graveyard, where a few of the natives sleep, and not far, the graves of the fourteen Spaniards lost in the wreck of the ship Sagunto in the year 1813. I used to think it was a pleasant place, that low, rocky and grassy island, though so wild and lonely.

From the little town of Laurvig, near Christiania, in Norway, came John and Maren Hontvet to this country, and five years ago took up their abode in this desolate spot, in one of the cottages facing the cove and Appledore. And there they lived through the long winters and the lovely summers, John making a comfortable living by fishing, Maren, his wife, keeping as bright and tidy and sweet a little home for him as man could desire. The bit of garden they cultivated in the summer was a pleasure to them; they made their house as pretty as they could with paint and paper and gay pictures, and Maren had a shelf for her plants at the window; and John was always so good to her, so kind and thoughtful of her comfort and of what would please her, she was entirely happy. Sometimes she was a little lonely, perhaps, when he was tossing afar off on the sea, setting or hauling his trawls, or had sailed to Portsmouth to sell his fish.

So that she was doubly glad when the news came that some of her people were coming over from Norway to live with her. And first, in the month of May, 1871, came her sister Karen, who stayed only a short time with Maren, and then came to Appledore, where she lived at service two years, till within a fortnight of her death. The first time I saw Maren she brought her sister to us, and I was charmed with the little woman's beautiful behavior; she was so gentle, courteous, decorous, she left on my mind a most delightful impression. Her face struck me as remarkably good and intelligent, and her gray eyes were full of light.

Karen was a rather sad-looking woman, about twenty-nine years old; she had lost a lover in Norway long since, and in her heart she fretted and mourned for this continually: she could not speak a word of English at first, but went patiently about her work and soon learned enough, and proved herself an excellent servant, doing faithfully and thoroughly everything she undertook, as is the way of her people generally. Her personal neatness was most attractive. She wore gowns made of cloth woven by herself in Norway, a coarse blue stuff, always neat and clean, and often I used to watch her as she sat by the fire spinning at a spinning-wheel brought from her own country; she made such a pretty picture, with her blue gown and fresh white apron, and the nice, clear white muslin bow with which she was in the habit of fastening her linen collar, that she was very agreeable to look upon. She had a pensive way of letting her head droop a little sideways as she spun, and while the low wheel hummed monotonously, she would sit crooning sweet, sad old Norwegian airs by the hour together, perfectly unconscious that she was affording such pleasure to a pair of appreciative eyes. On the 12th of October, 1872, in the second year of her stay with us, her brother, Ivan Christensen, and his wife, Anethe Mathea, came over from their Norseland in an evil day, and joined Maren and John at their island, living in the same house with them.

Ivan and Anethe had been married only since Christmas of the preceding year. Ivan was tall, light-haired, rather quiet and grave. Anethe was young, fair, and merry, with thick, bright sunny hair, which

was so long it reached, when unbraided, nearly to her knees; blue-eyed, with brilliant teeth and clear, fresh complexion, beautiful, and beloved beyond expression by her young husband, Ivan. Mathew Hontvet, John's brother, had also joined the little circle a year before, and now Maren's happiness was complete. Delighted to welcome them all, she made all things pleasant for them, and she told me only a few days ago, "I never was so happy in my life as when we were all living there together." So they abode in peace and quiet, with not an evil thought in their minds, kind and considerate to each other, the men devoted to their women and the women repaying them with interest, till out of the perfectly cloudless sky one day a bolt descended, without a whisper of warning, and brought ruin and desolation into that peaceful home.

Louis Wagner, who had been in this country seven years, appeared at the Shoals two years before the date of the murder. He lived about the islands during that time. He was born in Ueckermünde, a small town of lower Pomerania, in Northern Prussia. Very little is known about him, though there were vague rumors that his past life had not been without difficulties, and he had boasted foolishly among his mates that "not many had done what he had done and got off in safety;" but people did not trouble themselves about him or his past, all having enough to do to earn their bread and keep the wolf from the door. Maren describes him as tall, powerful, dark, with a peculiarly quiet manner. She says she never saw him drunk—he seemed always anxious to keep his wits about him: he would linger on the outskirts of a drunken brawl, listening to and absorbing everything, but never mixing himself up in any disturbance. He was always lurking in corners, lingering, looking, listening, and he would look no man straight in the eyes. She spoke, however, of having once heard him disputing with some sailors, at table, about some point of navigation; she did not understand it, but all were against Louis, and, waxing warm, all strove to show him he was in the wrong. As he rose and left the table she heard him mutter to himself with an oath, "I know I'm wrong, but I'll

never give in!" During the winter preceding the one in which his hideous deed was committed he lived at Star Island and fished alone, in a wherry; but he made very little money, and came often over to the Hontvets, where Maren gave him food when he was suffering from want, and where he received always a welcome and the utmost kindness. In the following June he joined Hontvet in his business of fishing, and took up his abode as one of the family at Smutty-Nose. During the summer he was "crippled," as he said, by the rheumatism, and they were all very good to him, and sheltered, fed, nursed and waited upon him the greater part of the season. He remained with them five weeks after Ivan and Anethe arrived, so that he grew to know Anethe as well as Maren, and was looked upon as a brother by all of them, as I have said before. Nothing occurred to show his true character, and in November he left the island and the kind people whose hospitality he was to repay so fearfully, and going to Portsmouth he took passage in another fishing schooner, the Addison Gilbert, which was presently wrecked off the coast, and he was again thrown out of employment. Very recklessly he said to Waldemar Ingebertsen, to Charles Jonsen, and even to John Hontvet himself, at different times, that "he must have money if he murdered for it." He loafed about Portsmouth eight weeks, doing nothing. Meanwhile Karen left our service in February, intending to go to Boston and work at a sewing-machine, for she was not strong and thought she should like it better than housework, but before going she lingered awhile with her sister Maren—fatal delay for her! Maren told me that during this time Karen went to Portsmouth and had her teeth removed, meaning to provide herself with a new set. At the Jonsens', where Louis was staying, one day she spoke to Mrs. Jonsen of her mouth, that it was so sensitive since the teeth had been taken out; and Mrs. Jonsen asked her how long she must wait before the new set could be put in. Karen replied that it would be three months. Louis Wagner was walking up and down at the other end of the room with his arms folded, his favorite attitude. Mrs. Jonsen's daughter passed near him and heard him mutter, "Three months! What is the

use! In three months you will be dead!" He did not know the girl was so near, and turning, he confronted her. He knew she must have heard what he said, and he glared at her like a wild man.

On the fifth day of March, 1873, John Hontvet, his brother Mathew, and Ivan Christensen set sail in John's little schooner, the Clara Bella, to draw their trawls. At that time four of the islands were inhabited; one family on White Island, at the lighthouse; the workmen who were building the new hotel on Star Island, and one or two households beside; the Hontvet family at Smutty-Nose; and on Appledore, the household at the large house, and on the southern side, opposite Smutty-Nose, a little cottage, where lived Jörge Edbardt Ingebertsen, his wife and children, and several men who fished with him. Smutty-Nose is not in sight of the large house at Appledore, so we were in ignorance of all that happened on that dreadful night, longer than the other inhabitants of the Shoals.

John, Ivan and Mathew went to draw their trawls, which had been set some miles to the eastward of the islands. They intended to be back to dinner, and then to go on to Portsmouth with their fish, and bait the trawls afresh, ready to bring back to set again next day. But the wind was strong and fair for Portsmouth and ahead for the islands; it would have been a long beat home against it; so they went on to Portsmouth, without touching at the island to leave one man to guard the women, as had been their custom. This was the first night in all the years Maren had lived there that the house was without a man to protect it. But John, always thoughtful for her, asked Emil Ingebertsen, whom he met on the fishing-grounds, to go over from Appledore and tell her that they had gone on to Portsmouth with the favoring wind, but that they hoped to be back that night. And he would have been back had the bait he expected from Boston arrived on the train in which it was due. How curiously everything adjusted itself to favor the bringing about of this horrible catastrophe! The bait did not arrive till the half-past twelve train, and they were obliged to work the whole night getting their trawls ready, thus leaving the way perfectly clear for Louis Wagner's awful work.

The three women left alone watched and waited in vain for the schooner to return, and kept the dinner hot for the men, and patiently wondered why they did not come. In vain they searched the wide horizon for that returning sail. Ah me, what pathos is in that longing look of women's eyes for far-off sails? That gaze, so eager, so steadfast, that it would almost seem as if it must conjure up the ghostly shape of glimmering canvas from the mysterious distances of sea and sky, and draw it unerringly home by the mere force of intense wistfulness! And those gentle eyes, that were never to see the light of another sun, looked anxiously across the heaving sea till twilight fell, and then John's messenger, Emil, arrived—Emil Ingebertsen, courteous and gentle as a youthful knight—and reassured them with his explanation, which having given, he departed, leaving them in a much more cheerful state of mind. So the three sisters, with only the little dog Ringe for a protector, sat by the fire chatting together cheerfully. They fully expected the schooner back again that night from Portsmouth, but they were not ill at ease while they waited Of what should they be afraid? They had not an enemy in the world! No shadow crept to the fireside to warn them what was at hand, no portent of death chilled the air as they talked their pleasant talk and made their little plans in utter unconsciousness. Karen was to have gone to Portsmouth with the fishermen that day, she was already dressed to go. Various little commissions were given her, errands to do for the two sisters she was to leave behind. Maren wanted some buttons, and "I'll give you one for a pattern; I'll put it in your purse," she said to Karen, "and then when you open your purse you'll be sure to remember it." (That little button, of a peculiar pattern, was found in Wagner's possession afterward.) They sat up till ten o'clock, talking together. The night was bright and calm; it was a comfort to miss the bitter winds that had raved about the little dwelling all the long, rough winter. Already it was spring; this calm was the first token of its coming. It was the 5th of March; in a few weeks the weather would soften, the grass grow green, and Anethe would see the first flowers in this strange country, so far from her home where she had left

father and mother, kith and kin, for love of Ivan. The delicious days of summer at hand would transform the work of the toiling fishermen to pleasure, and all things would bloom and smile about the poor people on the lonely rock! Alas, it was not to be.

At ten o clock they went to bed. It was cold and "lonesome" upstairs, so Maren put some chairs by the side of the lounge, laid a mattress upon it, and made up a bed for Karen in the kitchen, where she presently fell asleep. Maren and Anethe slept in the next room. So safe they felt themselves, they did not pull down a curtain, nor even try to fasten the house-door. They went to their rest in absolute security and perfect trust. It was the first still night of the new year; a young moon stole softly down toward the west, a gentle wind breathed through the quiet dark, and the waves whispered gently about the island, helping to lull those innocent souls to yet more peaceful slumber. Ah, where were the gales of March that might have plowed that tranquil sea to foam, and cut off the fatal path of Louis Wagner to that happy home! But nature seemed to pause and wait for him. I remember looking abroad over the waves that night and rejoicing over "the first calm night of the year!" It was so still, so bright! The hope of all the light and beauty a few weeks would bring forth stirred me to sudden joy. There should be spring again after the long winter-weariness.

> "Can trouble live in April days,
> Or sadness in the summer moons?"

I thought, as I watched the clear sky, grown less hard than it had been for weeks, and sparkling with stars. But before another sunset it seemed to me that beauty had fled out of the world, and that goodness, innocence, mercy, gentleness, were a mere mockery of empty words.

Here let us leave the poor women, asleep on the lonely rock, with no help near them in heaven or upon earth, and follow the fishermen to Portsmouth, where they arrived about four o'clock that afternoon. One of the first men whom they saw as they neared the town was Louis Wagner; to him they threw the rope from the schooner, and he helped draw her in to the

wharf. Greetings passed between them; he spoke to Mathew Hontvet, and as he looked at Ivan Christensen, the man noticed a flush pass over Louis's face. He asked were they going out again that night? Three times before they parted he asked that question; he saw that all the three men belonging to the island had come away together; he began to realize his opportunity. They answered him that if their bait came by the train in which they expected it, they hoped to get back that night, but if it was late they should be obliged to stay till morning, baiting their trawls; and they asked him to come and help them. It is a long and tedious business, the baiting of trawls; often more than a thousand hooks are to be manipulated, and lines and hooks coiled, clear of tangles, into tubs, all ready for throwing overboard, when the fishing-grounds are reached. Louis gave them a half promise that he would help them, but they did not see him again after leaving the wharf. The three fishermen were hungry, not having touched at their island, where Maren always provided them with a supply of food to take with them; they asked each other if either had brought any money with which to buy bread, and it came out that every one had left his pocket-book at home. Louis, standing by, heard all this. He asked John, then, if he had made fishing pay. John answered that he had cleared about six hundred dollars.

The men parted, the honest three about their business; but Louis, what became of him with his evil thoughts? At about half-past seven he went into a liquor shop and had a glass of something; not enough to make him unsteady,—he was too wise for that. He was not seen again in Portsmouth by any human creature that night. He must have gone, after that, directly down to the river, that beautiful, broad river, the Piscataqua, upon whose southern bank the quaint old city of Portsmouth dreams its quiet days away; and there he found a boat ready to his hand, a dory belonging to a man by the name of David Burke, who had that day furnished it with new thole-pins. Then it was picked up afterward off the mouth of the river, Louis's anxious oars had eaten half-way through the substance of these pins, which are always made of the hardest, toughest wood that can be found. A terrible

piece of rowing must that have been, in one night! Twelve miles from the city to the Shoals,—three to the light-houses, where the river meets the open sea, nine more to the islands; nine back again to Newcastle next morning! He took that boat, and with the favoring tide dropped down the rapid river where the swift current is so strong that oars are scarcely needed, except to keep the boat steady. Truly all nature seemed to play into his hands; this first relenting night of earliest spring favored him with its stillness, the tide was fair, the wind was fair, the little moon gave him just enough light, without betraying him to any curious eyes, as he glided down the three miles between the river banks, in haste to reach the sea. Doubtless the light west wind played about him as delicately as if he had been the most human of God's creatures; nothing breathed remonstrance in his ear, nothing whispered in the whispering water that rippled about his inexorable keel, steering straight for the Shoals through the quiet darkness. The snow lay thick and white upon the land in the moonlight; lamps twinkled here and there from dwellings on either side; in Eliot and Newcastle, in Portsmouth and Kittery, roofs, chimneys, and gables showed faintly in the vague light; the leafless trees clustered dark in hollows or lifted their tracery of bare boughs in higher spaces against the wintry sky. His eyes must have looked on it all, whether he saw the peaceful picture or not. Beneath many a humble roof honest folk were settling into their untroubled rest, as "this planned piece of deliberate wickedness" was stealing silently by with his heart full of darkness, blacker than the black tide that swirled beneath his boat and bore him fiercely on. At the river's mouth stood the sentinel light-houses, sending their great spokes of light afar into the night, like the arms of a wide humanity stretching into the darkness helping hands to bring all who needed succor safely home. He passed them, first the tower at Fort Point, then the taller one at Whale's Back, steadfastly holding aloft their warning fires. There was no signal from the warning bell as he rowed by, though a danger more subtle, more deadly, than fog, or hurricane, or pelting storm was passing swift beneath it. Unchallenged by anything in earth or heaven, he kept on his

way and gained the great outer ocean, doubtless pulling strong and steady, for he had no time to lose, and the longest night was all too short for an undertaking such as this. Nine miles from the light-houses to the islands! Slowly he makes his way; it seems to take an eternity of time. And now he is midway between the islands and the coast. That little toy of a boat with its one occupant in the midst of the awful, black heaving sea! The vast dim ocean whispers with a thousand waves; against the boat's side the ripples lightly tap, and pass and are lost; the air is full of fine, mysterious voices of winds and waters. Has he no fear, alone there on the midnight sea with such a purpose in his heart? The moonlight sends a long, golden track across the waves; it touches his dark face and figure, it glitters on his dripping oars. On his right hand Boone Island light shows like a setting star on the horizon, low on his left the two beacons twinkle off Newburyport, at the mouth of the Merrimack river; all the light-houses stand watching along the coast, wheeling their long, slender shafts of radiance as if pointing at this black atom creeping over the face of the planet with such colossal evil in his heart. Before him glitters the Shoals' light at White Island, and helps to guide him to his prey. Alas, my friendly light-house, that you should serve so terrible a purpose! Steadily the oars click in the rowlocks; stroke after stroke of the broad blades draws him away from the lessening line of land, over the wavering floor of the ocean, nearer the lonely rocks. Slowly the coast-lights fade, and now the roar of the sea among the lonely ledges of the Shoals salutes his attentive ear. A little longer and he nears Appledore, the first island, and now he passes by the snow-covered, ice-bound rock, with the long buildings showing clear in the moonlight. He must have looked at them as he went past. I wonder we who slept beneath the roofs that glimmered to his eyes in the uncertain light did not feel, through the thick veil of sleep, what fearful thing passed by! But we slumbered peacefully as the unhappy woman whose doom every click of those oars in the rowlocks, like the ticking of some dreadful clock, was bringing nearer and nearer. Between the islands he passes; they are full of chilly gleams and glooms. There is no scene

more weird than these snow-covered rocks in winter, more shudderful and strange: the moonlight touching them with mystic glimmer, the black water breaking about them, and the vast shadowy spaces of the sea stretching to the horizon on every side, full of vague sounds, of half lights and shadows, of fear, and of mystery. The island he seeks lies before him, lone and still; there is no gleam in any window, there is no help near, nothing upon which the women can call for succor. He does not land in the cove where all boats put in; he rows round to the south side and draws his boat up on the rocks. His red returning footsteps are found here next day, staining the snow. He makes his way to the house he knows so well.

All is silent: nothing moves, nothing sounds but the hushed voices of the sea. His hand is on the latch, he enters stealthily, there is nothing to resist him. The little dog, Ringe, begins to bark sharp and loud, and Karen rouses, crying, "John, is that you?" thinking the expected fishermen had returned. Louis seizes a chair and strikes at her in the dark; the clock on a shelf above her head falls down with the jarring of the blow, and stops at exactly seven minutes to one. Maren, in the next room, waked suddenly from her sound sleep, trying in vain to make out the meaning of it all, cries, "What's the matter?" Karen answers, "John scared me!" Maren springs from her bed and tries to open her chamber door; Louis has fastened it on the other side by pushing a stick through over the latch. With her heart leaping with terror the poor child shakes the door with all her might, in vain. Utterly confounded and bewildered, she hears Karen screaming, "John kills me! John kills me!" She hears the sound of repeated blows and shrieks, till at last her sister falls heavily against the door, which gives way, and Maren rushes out. She catches dimly a glimpse of a tall figure outlined against the southern window; she seizes poor Karen and drags her with the strength of frenzy within the bedroom. This unknown terror, this fierce, dumb monster who never utters a sound to betray himself through the whole, pursues her with blows, strikes her three times with a chair, either blow with fury sufficient to kill her, had it been light enough for him to see how to direct it; but she gets her sister

inside and the door shut, and holds it against him with all her might and Karen's failing strength. What a little heroine was this poor child, struggling with the force of desperation to save herself and her sisters!

All this time Anethe lay dumb, not daring to move or breathe, roused from the deep sleep of youth and health by this nameless, formless terror. Maren, while she strives to hold the door at which Louis rattles again and again, calls to her in anguish, "Anethe, Anethe! Get out of the window! run! hide!" The poor girl, almost paralyzed with fear, tries to obey, puts her bare feet out of the low window, and stands outside in the freezing snow, with one light garment over her cowering figure shrinking in the cold winter wind, the clear moonlight touching her white face and bright hair and fair young shoulders. "Scream! scream!" shouts frantic Maren. "Somebody at Star Island may hear!" but Anethe answers with the calmness of despair, "I cannot make a sound." Maren screams herself, but the feeble sound avails nothing. "Run! run!" she cries to Anethe; but again Anethe answers, "I cannot move."

Louis has left off trying to force the door; he listens. Are the women trying to escape? He goes out-of-doors. Maren flies to the window; he comes round the corner of the house and confronts Anethe where she stands in the snow. The moonlight shines full in his face; she shrieks loudly and distinctly, "Louis, Louis!"

Ah, he is discovered, he is recognized! Quick as thought he goes back to the front door, at the side of which stands an ax left there by Maren, who had used it the day before to cut the ice from the well. He returns to Anethe standing shuddering there. It is no matter that she is beautiful, young, and helpless to resist, that she has been kind to him, that she never did a human creature harm, that she stretches her gentle hands out to him in agonized entreaty, crying piteously, "Oh, Louis, Louis, Louis!" He raises the ax and brings it down on her bright head in one tremendous blow, and she sinks without a sound and lies in a heap, with her warm blood reddening the snow. Then he deals her blow after blow, almost within reach of Maren's hands, as she stands at the window. Distracted, Maren strives to rouse poor Karen, who kneels

with her head on the side of the bed; with desperate entreaty she tries to get her up and away, but Karen moans, "I cannot, I cannot." She is too far gone; and then Maren knows she cannot save her, and that she must flee herself or die. So, while Louis again enters the house, she seizes a skirt and wraps round her shoulders, and makes her way out of the open window, over Anethe's murdered body, barefooted, flying away, anywhere, breathless, shaking with terror.

Where can she go? Her little dog, frightened into silence, follows her,—pressing so close to her feet that she falls over him more than once. Looking back she sees Louis has lit a lamp and is seeking for her. She flies to the cove; if she can but find his boat and row away in it and get help! It is not there; there is no boat in which she can get away. She hears Karen's wild screams,—he is killing her! Oh, where can she go? Is there any place on that little island where he will not find her? She thinks she will creep into one of the empty old houses by the water; but, no, she reflects, if I hide there, Ringe will bark and betray me the moment Louis comes to look for me. And Ringe saved her life, for next day Louis's bloody tracks were found all about those old buildings where he had sought her. She flies, with Karen's awful cries in her ears away over the rocks and snow to the farthest limit she can gain. The moon has set; it is about two o'clock in the morning, and oh, so cold! She shivers and shudders from head to feet, but her agony of terror is so great she is hardly conscious of bodily sensation. And welcome is the freezing snow, the jagged ice and iron rocks that tear her unprotected feet, the bitter brine that beats against the shore, the winter winds that make her shrink and tremble; "they are not so unkind as man's ingratitude!" Falling often, rising, struggling on with feverish haste, she makes her way to the very edge of the water; down almost into the sea she creeps, between two rocks, upon her hands and knees, and crouches, face downward, with Ringe nestled close beneath her breast, not daring to move through the long hours that must pass before the sun will rise again. She is so near the ocean she can almost reach the water with her hand. Had the wind breathed the least roughly the waves must have washed

over her. There let us leave her and go back to Louis Wagner. Maren heard her sister Karen's shrieks as she fled. The poor girl had crept into an unoccupied room in a distant part of the house, striving to hide herself. He could not kill her with blows, blundering in the darkness, so he wound a handkerchief about her throat and strangled her. But now he seeks anxiously for Maren. *Has* she escaped? What terror is in the thought! Escaped, to tell the tale, to accuse him as the murderer of her sisters. Hurriedly, with desperate anxiety, he seeks for her. His time was growing short; it was not in his programme that this brave little creature should give him so much trouble; he had not calculated on resistance from these weak and helpless women. Already it was morning, soon it would be daylight. He could not find her in or near the house; he went down to the empty and dilapidated houses about the cove, and sought her everywhere. What a picture! That bloodstained butcher, with his dark face, crawling about those cellars, peering for that woman! He dared not spend any more time; he must go back for the money he hoped to find, his reward for this! All about the house he searches, in bureau drawers, in trunks and boxes; he finds fifteen dollars for his night's work! Several hundreds were lying between some sheets folded at the bottom of a drawer in which he looked. But he cannot stop for more throrough investigation; a dreadful haste pursues him like a thousand fiends. He drags Anethe's stiffening body into the house, and leaves it on the kitchen floor. If the thought crosses his mind to set fire to the house and burn up his two victims, he dares not do it; it will make a fatal bonfire to light his homeward way; besides, it is useless, for Maren has escaped to accuse him, and the time presses so horribly!

But how cool a monster is he! After all this hard work he must have refreshment, to support him in the long row back to the land; knife and fork, cup and plate, were found next morning on the table near where Anethe lay; fragments of food which was not cooked in the house, but brought from Portsmouth, were scattered about. Tidy Maren had left neither dishes nor food when they went to bed. The handle of the teapot which she had left on the stove was stained and

smeared with blood. Can the human mind conceive of such hideous *nonchalance?* Wagner sat down in that room and ate and drank! It is almost beyond belief! Then he went to the well with a basin and towels, tried to wash off the blood, and left towels and basin in the well. He knows he must be gone! It is certain death to linger. He takes his boat and rows away towards the dark coast and the twinkling lights; it is for dear life, now! What powerful strokes send the small skiff rushing over the water!

There is no longer any moon, the night is far spent; already the east changes, the stars fade; he rows like a madman to reach the land, but a blush of morning is stealing up the sky, and sunrise is rosy over shore and sea, when panting, trembling, weary, a creature accursed, a blot on the face of the day he lands at Newcastle—too late! Too late! In vain he casts the dory adrift; she will not float away; the flood tide bears her back to give her testimony against him, and afterward she is found at Jaffrey's Point, near the "Devil's Den," and the fact of her worn thole-pins noted. Wet, covered with ice from the spray which has flown from his eager oars, utterly exhausted, he creeps to a knoll and reconnoitres; he thinks he is unobserved, and crawls on towards Portsmouth. But he is seen and recognized by many persons, and his identity established beyond a doubt. He goes to the house of Mathew Jonsen, where he has been living, steals upstairs, changes his clothes, and appears before the family, anxious, frightened, agitated, telling Jonsen he never felt so badly in his life; that he has got into trouble and is afraid he shall be taken. He cannot eat at breakfast, says "farewell forever," goes away and is shaved, and takes the train to Boston, where he provides himself with new clothes, shoes, a complete outfit, but lingering, held by fate, he cannot fly, and before night the officer's hand is on his shoulder and he is arrested.

Meanwhile poor shuddering Maren on the lonely island, by the water-side, waits till the sun is high in heaven before she dares to come forth. She thinks he may be still on the island. She said to me, "I thought he must be there, dead or alive. I thought he might go crazy and kill himself after having done all that." *At last* she steals out. The little dog frisks before

her; it is so cold her feet cling to the rocks and snow at every step, till the skin is fairly torn off. Still and frosty is the bright morning, the water lies smiling and sparkling, the hammers of the workmen building the new hotel on Star Island sound through the quiet air. Being on the side of Smutty-Nose opposite Star, she waves her skirt, and screams to attract their attention; they hear her, turn and look, see a woman waving a signal of distress, and, surprising to relate, turn tranquilly to their work again. She realizes at last there is no hope in that direction; she must go round toward Appledore in sight of the dreadful house. Passing it afar off she gives one swift glance toward it, terrified lest in the broad sunshine she may see some horrid token of last night's work; but all is still and peaceful. She notices the curtains the three had left up when they went to bed; they are now drawn down; she knows whose hand has done this, and what it hides from the light of day. Sick at heart, she makes her painful way to the northern edge of Malaga, which is connected with Smutty-Nose by the old sea-wall. She is directly opposite Appledore and the little cottage where abide her friend and countryman, Jörge Edvardt Ingebertsen, and his wife and children. Only a quarter of a mile of the still ocean separates her from safety and comfort. She sees the children playing about the door; she calls and calls. Will no one ever hear her? Her torn feet torment her, she is sore with blows and perishing with cold. At last her voice reaches the ears of the children, who run and tell their father that some one is crying and calling; looking across, he sees the poor little figure waving her arms, takes his dory and paddles over, and with amazement recognizes Maren in her night-dress, with bare feet and streaming hair, with a cruel bruise upon her face, with wild eyes, distracted, half senseless with cold and terror. He cries, "Maren, Maren, who has done this? what is it? who is it?" and her only answer is "Louis, Louis, Louis!" as he takes her on board his boat and rows home with her as fast as he can. From her incoherent statement he learns what has happened. Leaving her in the care of his family, he comes over across the hill to the great house on Appledore. As I sit at my desk I see him pass the window, and wonder why the old

man comes so fast and anxiously through the heavy snow.

Presently I see him going back again, accompanied by several of his own countrymen and others of our workmen, carrying guns. They are going to Smutty-Nose, and take arms, thinking it possible Wagner may yet be there. I call down-stairs, "What has happened?" and am answered, "Some trouble at Smutty-Nose; we hardly understand." "Probably a drunken brawl of the reckless fishermen who may have landed there," I say to myself, and go on with my work. In another half-hour I see the men returning, reinforced by others, coming fast, confusedly; and suddenly a wail of anguish comes up from the women below. I cannot believe it when I hear them crying, "Karen is dead! Anethe is dead! Louis Wagner has murdered them both!" I run out into the servants' quarters; there are all the men assembled, an awe-stricken crowd. Old Ingebertsen comes forward and tells me the bare facts, and how Maren lies at his house, half-crazy, suffering with her torn and frozen feet. Then the men are dispatched to search Appledore, to find if by any chance the murderer might be concealed about the place, and I go over to Maren to see if I can do anything for her. I find the women and children with frightened faces at the little cottage; as I go into the room where Maren lies, she catches my hands, crying, "Oh, I so glad to see you! I so glad I save my life!" and with her dry lips she tells me all the story as I have told it here. Poor little creature, holding me with those wild, glittering, dilated eyes, she cannot tell me rapidly enough the whole horrible tale. Upon her cheek is yet the blood-stain from the blow he struck her with a chair, and she shows me two more upon her shoulder, and her torn feet. I go back for arnica with which to bathe them. What a mockery seems to me the "jocund day" as I emerge into the sunshine, and looking across the space of blue, sparkling water, see the house wherein all that horror lies!

Oh, brightly shines the morning sun and glitters on the white sails of the little vessel that comes dancing back from Portsmouth before the favoring wind, with the two husbands on board! How glad they are for the sweet morning and the fair wind that brings them home

again! And Ivan sees in fancy Anethe's face all beautiful with welcoming smiles, and John knows how happy his good and faithful Maren will be to see him back again. Alas, how little they dream what lies before them! From Appledore they are signalled to come ashore, and Ivan and Mathew, landing, hear a confused rumor of trouble from tongues that hardly can frame the words that must tell the dreadful truth. Ivan only understands that something is wrong. His one thought is for Anethe; he flies to Ingebertsen's cottage, she may be there; he rushes in like a maniac, crying, "Anethe, Anethe! Where is Anethe?" and broken-hearted Maren answers her brother, "Anethe is —at home." He does not wait for another word, but seizes the little boat and lands at the same time with John on Smutty-Nose; with headlong haste they reach the house, other men accompanying them; ah, there are blood-stains all about the snow! Ivan is the first to burst open the door and enter. What words can tell it! There upon the floor, naked, stiff and stark, is the woman he idolizes, for whose dear feet he could not make life's ways smooth and pleasant enough—stone dead! Dead—horribly butchered! her bright hair stiff with blood, the fair head that had so often rested on his breast crushed, cloven, mangled with the brutal ax! Their eyes are blasted by the intolerable sight: both John and Ivan stagger out and fall, senseless, in the snow. Poor Ivan! his wife a thousand times adored, the dear girl he had brought from Norway, the good sweet girl who loved him so, whom he could not cherish tenderly enough! And he was not there to protect her! There was no one there to save her!

> "Did heaven look on
> And would not take their part!"

Poor fellow, what had he done that fate should deal him such a blow as this! Dumb, blind with anguish, he made no sign.

> "What says the body when they spring
> Some monstrous torture-engine's whole
> Strength on it? No more says the soul."

Some of his pitying comrades lead him away, like one stupefied, and take him back to Appledore. John

knows his wife is safe. Though stricken with horror and consumed with wrath, he is not paralyzed like poor Ivan, who has been smitten with worse than death. They find Karen's body in another part of the house, covered with blows and black in the face, strangled. They find Louis's tracks,—all the tokens of his disastrous presence,—the contents of trunks and drawers scattered about in his hasty search for the money, and all within the house and without, blood, blood, everywhere.

When I reach the cottage with the arnica for Maren, they have returned to Smutty-Nose. John, her husband, is there. He is a young man of the true Norse type, blue-eyed, fair-haired, tall and well made, with handsome teeth and bronzed beard. Perhaps he is a little quiet and undemonstrative generally, but at this moment he is superb, kindled from head to feet, a firebrand of woe and wrath, with eyes that flash and cheeks that burn. I speak a few words to him,—what words can meet such an occasion as this!—and having given directions about the use of the arnica, for Maren, I go away, for nothing more can be done for her, and every comfort she needs is hers. The outer room is full of men; they make way for me, and as I pass through I catch a glimpse of Ivan crouched with his arms thrown round his knees and his head bowed down between them, motionless, his attitude expressing such abandonment of despair as cannot be described. His whole person seems to shrink, as if deprecating the blow that has fallen upon him.

All day the slaughtered women lie as they were found, for nothing can be touched till the officers of the law have seen the whole. And John goes back to Portsmouth to tell his tale to the proper authorities. What a different voyage from the one he had just taken, when happy and careless he was returning to the home he had left so full of peace and comfort! What a load he bears back with him, as he makes his tedious way across the miles that separate him from the means of vengeance he burns to reach! But at last he arrives, tells his story, the police at other cities are at once telegraphed, and the city marshal follows Wagner to Boston. At eight o'clock that evening comes the steamer Mayflower to the Shoals, with all

the officers on board. They land and make investigations at Smutty-Nose, then come here to Appledore and examine Maren, and, when everything is done steam back to Portsmouth, which they reach at three o'clock in the morning. After all are gone and his awful day's work is finished at last, poor John comes back to Maren, and kneeling by the side of her bed, he is utterly overpowered with what he has passed through; he is shaken with sobs as he cries, "Oh, Maren, Maren, it is too much, too much! I cannot bear it!" And Maren throws her arms about his neck, crying, "Oh John, John, don't! I shall be crazy, I shall die if you go on like that." Poor innocent, unhappy people, who never wronged a fellow-creature in their lives!

But Ivan—what is their anguish to his? They dare not leave him alone lest he do himself an injury. He is perfectly mute and listless; he cannot weep, he can neither eat nor sleep. He sits like one in a horrid dream. "Oh, my poor, poor brother!" Maren cries in tones of deepest grief, when I speak his name to her next day. She herself cannot rest a moment till she hears that Louis is taken; at every sound her crazed imagination fancies he is coming back for her; she is fairly beside herself with terror and anxiety; but the night following that of the catastrophe brings us news that he is arrested, and there is stern rejoicing at the Shoals: but no vengeance on him can bring back those unoffending lives, or restore that gentle home. The dead are properly cared for; the blood is washed from Anethe's beautiful bright hair; she is clothed in her wedding-dress, the blue dress in which she was married, poor child, that happy Christmas time in Norway, a little more than a year ago. They are carried across the sea to Portsmouth, the burial service is read over them, and they are hidden in the earth. After poor Ivan has seen the faces of his wife and sister still and pale in their coffins, their ghastly wounds concealed as much as possible, flowers upon them and the priest praying over them, his trance of misery is broken, the grasp of despair is loosened a little about his heart. Yet hardly does he notice whether the sun shines or no, or care whether he lives or dies. Slowly his senses steady themselves from the effects of a shock that nearly destroyed him, and merciful time, with imper-

ceptible touch, softens day by day the outlines of that picture, at the memory of which he will never cease to shudder while he lives.

Louis Wagner was captured in Boston on the evening of the next day after his atrocious deed, and Friday morning, followed by a hooting mob, he was taken to the Eastern depot. At every station along the route crowds were assembled, and there were fierce cries for vengeance. At the depot in Portsmouth a dense crowd of thousands of both sexes had gathered, who assailed him with yells and curses and cries of "Tear him to pieces!" It was with difficulty he was at last safely imprisoned. Poor Maren was taken to Portsmouth from Appledore on that day. The story of Wagner's day in Boston, like every other detail of the affair, has been told by every newspaper in the country: his agitation and restlessness, noted by all who saw him; his curious reckless talk. To one he says, "I have just killed two sailors;" to another, Jacob Toldtman, into whose shop he goes to buy shoes, "I have seen a woman lie as still as that boot," and so on. When he is caught he puts on a bold face and determines to brave it out; denies everything with tears and virtuous indignation. The men whom he has so fearfully wronged are confronted with him; his attitude is one of injured innocence; he surveys them more in sorrow than in anger, while John is on fire with wrath and indignation, and hurls maledictions at him; but Ivan, poor Ivan, hurt beyond all hope or help, is utterly mute; he does not utter one word. Of what use is it to curse the murderer of his wife? It will not bring her back; he has no heart for cursing, he is too completely broken. Maren told me the first time she was brought into Louis's presence, her heart leaped so fast she could hardly breathe. She entered the room softly with her husband and Mathew Jonsen's daughter. Louis was whittling a stick. He looked up and saw her face, and the color ebbed out of his, and rushed back and stood in one burning spot in his cheek, as he looked at her and she looked at him for a space, in silence. Then he drew about his evil mind the detestable garment of sanctimoniousness, and in sentimental accents he murmured, "I'm glad Jesus loves me!" "The devil loves you!" cried John,

with uncompromising veracity. "I know it wasn't nice," said decorous Maren, "but John couldn't help it; it was too much to bear!"

The next Saturday afternoon, when he was to be taken to Saco, hundreds of fishermen came to Portsmouth from all parts of the coast, determined on his destruction, and there was a fearful scene in the quiet streets of that peaceful city when he was being escorted to the train by the police and various officers of justice. Two thousand people had assembled, and such a furious, yelling crowd was never seen or heard in Portsmouth. The air was rent with cries for vengeance; showers of bricks and stones were thrown from all directions, and wounded several of the officers who surrounded Wagner. His knees trembled under him, he shook like an aspen, and the officers found it necessary to drag him along, telling him he must keep up if he would save his life. Except that they feared to injure the innocent as well as the guilty, those men would have literally torn him to pieces. But at last he was put on board the cars in safety, and carried away to prison. His demeanor throughout the term of his confinement, and during his trial and subsequent imprisonment, was a wonderful piece of acting. He really inspired people with doubt as to his guilt. I make an extract from the Portsmouth Chronicle, dated March 13th, 1873: "Wagner still retains his amazing *sang froid*, which is wonderful, even in a strong-nerved German. The sympathy of most of the visitors at his jail has certainly been won by his calmness and his general appearance, which is quite prepossessing." This little instance of his method of proceeding I must subjoin: A lady who had come to converse with him on the subject of his eternal salvation said, as she left him, "I hope you put your trust in the Lord," to which he sweetly answered, "I always did, ma'am, and I always shall."

A few weeks after all this had happened, I sat by the window one afternoon, and, looking up from my work, I saw some one passing slowly,—a young man who seemed so thin, so pale, so bent and ill, that I said, "Here is some stranger who is so very sick, he is probably come to try the effect of the air, even thus early." It was Ivan Christensen. I did not recognize

him. He dragged one foot after the other wearily, and walked with the feeble motion of an old man. He entered the house; his errand was to ask for work. He could not bear to go away from the neighborhood of the place where Anethe had lived and where they had been so happy, and he could not bear to work at fishing on the south side of the island, within sight of that house. There was work enough for him here; a kind voice told him so, a kind hand was laid on his shoulder, and he was bidden come and welcome. The tears rushed into the poor fellow's eyes, he went hastily away, and that night sent over his chest of tools,—he was a carpenter by trade. Next day he took up his abode here and worked all summer. Every day I carefully observed him as I passed him by, regarding him with an inexpressible pity, of which he was perfectly unconscious, as he seemed to be of everything and everybody. He never raised his head when he answered my "Good-morning," or "Good-evening, Ivan." Though I often wished to speak, I never said more to him, for he seemed to me to be hurt too sorely to be touched by human hand. With his head sunk on his breast, and wearily dragging his limbs, he pushed the plane or drove the saw to and fro with a kind of dogged persistence, looking neither to the left nor right. Well might the weight of woe he carried bow him to the earth! By and by he spoke, himself, to other members of the household, saying, with a patient sorrow, he believed it was to have been, it had so been ordered, else why did all things so play into Louis's hands? All things were furnished him: the knowledge of the unprotected state of the women, a perfectly clear field in which to carry out his plans, just the right boat he wanted in which to make his voyage, fair tide, fair wind, calm sea, just moonlight enough; even the ax with which to kill Anethe stood ready to his hand at the house door. Alas, it was to have been! Last summer Ivan went back again to Norway—alone. Hardly is it probable that he will ever return to a land whose welcome to him fate made so horrible. His sister Maren and her husband still live blameless lives, with the little dog Ringe, in a new home they have made for themselves in Portsmouth, not far from the riverside; the merciful lapse of days and years takes

them gently but surely away from the thought of that season of anguish; and though they can never forget it all, they have grown resigned and quiet again. And on the island other Norwegians have settled, voices of charming children sound sweetly in the solitude that echoed so awfully to the shrieks of Karen and Maren. But to the weirdness of the winter midnight something is added, a vision of two dim, reproachful shades who watch while an agonized ghost prowls eternally about the dilapidated houses at the beach's edge, close by the black, whispering water, seeking for the woman who has escaped him—escaped to bring upon him the death he deserves, whom he never, never, never can find, though his distracted spirit may search till man shall vanish from off the face of the earth, and time shall be no more.

A CUP OF COLD WATER.

BY

GRACE GREENWOOD.

Sincerely yours—
Grace Greenwood

MRS. SARA J. LIPPINCOTT,

GRACE GREENWOOD, was born in Pompey, Onondaga County, N. Y., in 1823. Her father was a well-known physician, Dr. Thaddeus Clarke. Miss Clarke was educated at Rochester, but removed with her family in 1842 to New Brighton, Pennsylvania. She published occasional verses at an early age; in 1844, began writing prose for the New York *Mirror*, and soon after for the *Home Journal* and the literary magazines of the day. In the spring of 1852 she made her first visit to Europe. In the autumn of the year following she was married to Mr. L. K. Lippincott, of Philadelphia, and commenced the publication of *The Little Pilgrim*, a monthly magazine for young folks. Her contributions to this were remarkable for the happy manner in which they conveyed historical and biographical information. Her best known books for children are entitled, "History of My Pets" (1850); "Recollections of My Childhood" (1851); "Stories of Many Lands" (1866); "Merrie England" (1854); "Bonnie Scotland" (1860); "Stories and Legends of Travel and History"; "Stories and Sights of France and Italy" (1867). The volumes for older readers are two series of collected prose writings, "Greenwood Leaves" (1849, 1851); "Poems" (1850); "Haps and Mishaps of a Tour in Europe" (1852); "A Forest Tragedy" (1856); "A Record of Five Years" (1867); "New Life in New Lands" (1873); "Victoria, Queen of England." This last was published, in 1883, by Anderson & Allen of New York, and Sampson, Low & Marston, London. Grace Greenwood has been connected as editor and contributor with various American magazines, and leading weekly and daily papers, Mrs. Lippincott has written much for London journals.

especially for *All the Year Round.* During the past eight years she has lived almost wholly in Europe, for the benefit of her greatly impaired health and for the education of her daughter. She is a cosmopolitan, and greatly enjoyed the character her friends gave her of wanderer. Mrs. Lippincott is a writer of wide fame and well-earned celebrity. The amount of brain-work she has accomplished in journalism no one can properly estimate. Her contributions have been continuous, and they extend over many years. She has a happy descriptive faculty, which has enabled her to write interestingly of scenes and events observed in her travels, and she is of a nature so sunny that her word-pictures are always fascinating and instinctively entertaining. Mrs. Lippincott is now again a resident of her own country, and will live permanently in New York.

A CUP OF COLD WATER.

SHORTLY after the close of the great war, I travelled on the railway for some hours of a bright, June day, seated beside a young soldier, a cavalryman, from Wisconsin, who was on his way home, with an honorable discharge, after a service of four years. My fellow-traveller proved to be quite intelligent and sociably inclined, and beguiled the way by relating many incidents of the battle-field, and of camp and hospital life. One of the simplest of his stories, told with an appearance of the utmost good faith, I have never forgotten—remembering distinctly every detail, while some of his more marvellous and tragical narrations have quite faded from my mind.

"Our regiment," he said, "was under Banks, in the spring of 1862, when he made such good time in getting down the Shenandoah Valley. It was an awful, driving, confused, exhausting, hurry-skurry 'change of base,' but it's curious that I chiefly remember it by a little incident, which perhaps you will think was hardly worth laying up, and is hardly worth telling of."

I signified my desire to hear his little story and he went on:

"I was one morning dispatched, in hot haste, to the extreme rear, with a very important order. As ill-luck would have it, I had to ride a strange horse, as my own had fallen lame. The one provided for me proved just the most ill-natured, vicious brute I ever mounted. I had hard work to mount him at all, for his furious rearing and plunging; and when, at last, I reached the saddle, he was so enraged, there was no getting him on for at least five minutes. With his ugly head down, and his ears back, he would whirl round and round, pivoting on his fore-feet, and lashing out with his hind-legs, till I fancy they must have looked like the spokes of a big wheel. When he found that I was

master of the situation, that my hand was firm and my spurs were sharp, he gave in—till the next time; but I knew that he was continually watching for a chance to fling me over his head and trample the mastership out of me.

"I rode hard that day, both because of my orders, and for the purpose of putting that devil of a horse through; but there were many obstructions in the road—marching columns, artillery, army-wagons, and, above all, hosts of contrabands, who were always scrambling to get out of your way, just *into* your way; so it was noon before I had made half of my distance. It was a hot, sultry, and dusty day. I had exhausted my canteen, and was panting, with tongue almost lolling, like a dog. Just as my thirst was becoming quite unbearable, I came upon a group of soldiers, lounging by a wayside spring, drinking and filling their canteens. At first I thought I would dismount, as my horse seemed pretty well subdued and *blowed;* but no sooner did he guess my intention, than he began again his diabolical friskings and plungings, at which the stragglers about the spring set up a provoking laugh, which brought my already hot blood up to the boiling-point. Still, I didn't burst out at once. I swung off my canteen, and said to one of the men, the only fellow that hadn't laughed at my bout with the horse: 'Here comrade, just you fill this for me.'

"He was a tall, dark, heavy-browed, surly-looking chap, but, for all that, I didn't look for such an answer as he growled out:

"'Fill your own canteen, and be —— to you!'

"I tell you I was mad; the other fellows laughed again, and then I was madder, and I just says to him: 'You mean devil! I hope to God I shall yet hear you begging for a drink of water! If ever I do, I'll see you die, and go where you belong, before I'll give it to you!'

"Then I galloped on, though some of the men called to me to come back, saying they'd fill my canteen. I didn't stop till I reached a house, a mile or two further on, where a little black boy watered both me and my horse, and filled my canteen, with a smile that the handful of new pennies I gave him

couldn't begin to pay for. When I compared the conduct of this poor little chip of ebony, who said he 'never had no father, nor mother, nor no name but Pete,' with the treatment I had received from a white fellow-soldier, I found that that drink of cold water hadn't cooled down my anger much. And for months and months after, whenever I thought of that affair, the old, mad feeling would come boiling up. The fellow's face always came out as clear before me as my own brother's, only it seemed to be more sharply cut into my memory. I don't know why I resented this offence so bitterly. I have let bigger things of the sort pass, and soon forgotten them; but *this* stuck by me. I am not a revengeful fellow naturally, but I never gave up the hope of seeing that man again, and somehow paying him back for his brutal insolence. There wasn't a camp or review I was in for the next two years but I looked for him, right and left. I never went over a field, after a battle, but that I searched for him among the dying—God forgive me! At last my opportunity came.

"I had been wounded, and was in one of the Washington hospitals—almost well, yet still not quite fit for duty in the saddle. I hate, above all things, to be idle; so I begged for light employment as a hospital nurse, and they gave it to me, and said I did my duty well.

"I never felt for our poor, brave fellows as I did there. I had been very fortunate, and until that summer had never been in hospital. Now I saw such suffering and such heroism as I had never seen on the battle-field. Companionship helped to keep up the spirits of those we could not save, to the last. Then it seemed hard that each brave boy must make his march down the dark valley alone. But they all went off gallantly. I would rather have galloped forward on a forlorn charge, any day, than have followed any one of them over to the 'Soldiers' Rest,' though it is a pretty place to camp down in. In fact, my heart grew so soft here, so Christianized, as it were, that I forgot to look for my old enemy; for so, you see, I still regarded the surly straggler who refused me the water at roadside spring.

"After the battles of the Wilderness, a great mul-

titude of the wounded were poured in upon us; all our wards were filled to overflowing. It was hot, close weather; most of the patients were fevered by their wounds and exposure to the sun, and up and down the long, ghastly lines of white beds the great cry was for water. I took a large pitcher of ice-water and a tumbler, and started on the round of my ward, as eager to give as the poor fellows were to receive. The ice rattled and rung in the pitcher in a most inviting way, and many heavy eyes opened at the sound, and many a hot hand was stretched out, when, all at once, on one of the two farthest beds of the ward, I saw a man start up, with his face flaming with fever and his eyes gleaming, as he almost screamed out: 'Water! give me water, for God's sake!'

"Then, madam, I could see no other face in all the ward, for it was *he!*

"I made a few steps towards him, and saw he knew me as well as I knew him, for he fell back on his pillow, and just turned his face toward the wall. Then the devil tightened his grip on me, till it seemed he had me fast and sure, and he seemed to whisper into my ear: 'Rattle the ice in the pitcher, and aggravate him! Go up and down, giving water to all the others, and not a drop to him!'

"Then *something else* whispered, a little nearer, though not in such a sharp, hissing way—conscience, I suppose it was; good Methodists might call it the Holy Spirit; other religious people might say it was the spirit of my mother; and perhaps we would all mean about the same thing—anyhow, it seemed to say: 'Now, my boy, is your chance to return good for evil. Go to him, give him to drink first of all!' And that *something* walked me right up to his bedside, made me slide my hand under his shoulder and raise him up, and put the tumbler to his lips. How he drank I never can forget—in long, deep draughts, almost a tumbler full at a swallow, looking at me so wistfully all the time. When he was satisfied, he fell back, and again turned his face to the wall, without a word. But somehow I knew that fellow's heart was touched, as no chaplain's sermon or tract had ever touched it.

"I asked the surgeon to let me have the sole care of this patient, and he consented, though he said the

man had a bad gun-shot wound in the knee, and would have to submit to an amputation, if he could stand it; and if not, would probably make me a great deal of trouble while he lasted.

"Well, I took charge of him—I *had* to do it, somehow—but he kept up the same silence with me for several days; then, one morning, just as I was leaving his bedside, he caught hold of my coat and pulled me back. I bent down to ask him what he wanted, and he said, in a hoarse whisper: 'You remember that canteen business in the Shenandoah Valley?' 'Yes; but it don't matter now, old fellow,' I answered.

"'But it *does* matter,' he said. 'I don't know what made me so surly that day, only that an upstart young lieutenant from our town had just been swearing at me for straggling; and I wasn't to blame, for I was sick. I came down with the fever the next day. As for what I said to you, I was ashamed of it before you got out of sight; and, to tell the truth, I've been looking for you these two years, just to tell you so. But when I met you here, where I was crying, almost dying, for water, it seemed so like the carrying out of your curse, I was almost afraid of you.'

"I tell you what, madam, it gave me strange feelings to think of him looking for me, to make up, and I looking for him, to be revenged, all this time; and it was such a little sin, after all. I'm not ashamed to confess that the tears came into my eyes as I said: 'Now, Eastman (that was his name; he was a Maine man), don't fret about that little matter any more; it's all right, and you've been a better fellow than I all along.'

"But he had taken it to heart, and was too weak to throw it off. It was 'so mean,' he said, 'so unsoldier-like and bearish;' and I was 'so good to forgive it,' he insisted.

"I stood by him while his leg was amputated, and when, after a time, the surgeon said even that couldn't save him, that he was sinking, I found that the man was like a brother to me. He took the hard news that he must die, just as the war was almost ended, like the brave fellow he was. He dictated a last letter to his sister, the only relative he had; gave me some directions about sending some keepsakes to her, and then

asked for the chaplain. This was a good, sensible, elderly man, aud he talked in about the right style, I think, and made us all feel quite comfortable in the belief that in the Father's house there must be a mansion for the poor soldier, who had so often camped out in snow and rain; and that for him who had given his all for his country, some great good must be in store.

"At last, the poor fellow said to the chaplain: 'Isn't there something in the Bible, about giving a cup of cold water?' Ah! madam, I can't tell you how that hurt me. 'O Eastman!' said I, don't, don't!' But he only smiled as the chaplain repeated the verse. Then he turned to me and said: 'You didn't think what you were doing for yourself when you gave me that glass of ice-water the other day, did you, old fellow? Can I pass for one of the *little ones*, though, with my six-feet-two?' Then he went on talking about being little, and the kingdom of heaven, till we almost feared his mind was wandering; but perhaps it was only finding its way home. 'I do feel strangely childish to-night," he said. 'I feel like saying the prayer-verse my mother taught me when she used to put me to bed, twenty-five years ago. If you'll excuse me, I'll say it, all to myself, before I go to sleep.'

"So he bade us good-night, turned over on his pillow, and softly shut his eyes; his lips moved a little while, and then, indeed, he went to sleep."

An Evening's Adventure.

BY

ABBA GOULD WOOLSON.

Truly Yours: Abba Goold Woolson

ABBA GOOLD WOOLSON.

MRS. WOOLSON is the daughter of Hon. William Goold, who has long been recognized in Portland, Me., as an authority on matters which concern its local history. He has served for years as an active member, and as corresponding secretary, of the Maine Historical Society; is the author of several leading papers in recent publications of the society; and of a large volume entitled "Portland in the Past," published in that city in 1886. For two years he represented the Portland district in the State Legislature as senator, with a previous service of two years as representative.

Abba Louisa, the second of a family of seven children, was born April 30, 1838, at the old homestead at Windham, ten miles from Portland, a town known as a Quaker stronghold, but whose chief claim to distinction rests on the fact that it was the birthplace of Gov. John A. Andrew, of Massachusetts. Here her family have resided for four generations; her great-grandfather, Benjamin Goold—a native of Kittery, Me.—having removed thither from Portland (then Falmouth) in 1774. He served as town treasurer; his son Nathan was justice of the peace; represented the town in the Massachusetts Legislature, when Maine was a province of that State, and was made captain of the military company raised in Gorham and Windham for service in the war of 1812. In the old field, which slopes broadly toward the west, is the private burial-ground of the family,—a long, low ridge shaded with trees, bearing the name of "Happy Hill." There sleep the several generations of Goolds, from the great-grandfather aforesaid, to an elder and beloved sister, who died but a few years ago.

Her education was received in the several grades of the Portland public schools; and she graduated from

the Girls' High School in 1856, as valedictorian of her class. In the same year she was married to the principal of the school, Mr. Moses Woolson, an eminent teacher, who held this position in Portland for thirteen years. In 1862, he was elected as principal of the Woodward High School, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and there Mr. and Mrs. Woolson resided until 1865. When, at the close of the war, Mr. Woolson was invited to take charge of the high school of his native city, Concord, New Hampshire, they returned to New England. A call to a mastership in the high school of Boston, drew him to that city in 1868, and there they lived for about six years, returning to Concord in 1873, for another residence in that city,—this time of thirteen years. Since October, 1887, they have lived in Boston again.

During this time, Mrs. Woolson herself has, for brief periods, accepted invitations to teach her favorite studies, acting for some months, while in Cincinnati, as Professor of Belles Lettres at the Mount Auburn Young Ladies' Institute; in Haverhill, Mass., as lady principal of the high school; and as assistant in the Concord High School, where, with her husband, she taught for awhile the higher mathematics and Latin.

Mrs. Woolson has published four volumes; viz. "Women in American Society" (1873); "Dress-Reform" (1874); "Browsing Among Books" (1881); and "George Eliot and Her Heroines" (1887).

Her poetry has not yet been published in book form. When Portland celebrated its centennial in 1886, with elaborate and imposing ceremonies, Mrs. Woolson was unanimously chosen to fill the position of poet, and received the thanks of the city for the long ode she read on that occasion. In Concord, N. H., she has also been led, by formal invitations, to deliver poems at the opening of the Board-of-Trade Building, of the Chapel of the Second Congregational Society, and of the Fowler Literary Building. In Boston she is a member of several literary and benevolent associations, and is especially active in The Castilian Club, of which organization she is president.

Her time is largely given to connected courses of lectures before literary societies on English Literature in connection with English, and with foreign his-

tory; on the Historical Plays of Shakespeare, and matters of Spanish History, Scenery, and Life.

In 1883–1884, she made a tour of thirteen months abroad, spending a summer in Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England; and visiting, in addition to the countries usually seen by tourists, Austria, Hungary, Southern Italy, Spain, and Morocco. In previous years she had made a journey to the Pacific Coast, visiting the big trees, and the Yosemite Valley.

AN EVENING'S ADVENTURE

AT

THE DEACÓN HOUSE.

If you were one of the thousand curious visitors who were permitted to examine the wonders of the Deacón House, previous to the public sale of its furniture and contents a week ago, you must have noticed a picture that hung there in the library, above an old, richly carved cabinet, and which was set down in the catalogue as a Delilah by Rubens. It represented the upturned face of a woman, so strikingly beautiful, with its Grecian outline and warm, clear coloring, that the most careless could not easily forget it.

This picture greatly charmed a wealthy lady, who had been admitted to a private view of the house before it was thrown open to the great crowd of ticket holders; but as she had then no reason to doubt that the painting was a veritable Rubens, and likely to command an immense price at the auction, she indulged no hope of obtaining it for herself. She resolved, however, upon procuring a copy, if the thing were possible; and as she was a personal friend of some of the heirs of the property, she had no difficulty in obtaining permission for any artist whom she might select to visit the house at all hours, previous to the first day of the sale.

The artist chosen was none other than my intimate friend Jeannette, who had spent considerable time at copying in the Louvre and other galleries while pursuing her Art education abroad, and whose skill in such painting had begun to attract attention from connoisseurs. She liked the task that was given her, and set immediately about it; but owing to the constant throngs of sight-seers that filled the rooms day after day, she was restricted to a few hours of the early morning and one of the late afternoon for her work. She became ambitious to produce an exact and finished copy; and

the last afternoon before the sale found her with some hours' labor yet to be added to the picture before she could regard it as complete.

On the morning of that day she came to me to ask if I would be willing to remain with her at the house from four o'clock, when the crowd would be gone, until such time in the early evening as her work would permit her to leave, saying that her brother, who was to keep her company there, had but just now been obliged to leave town unexpectedly, and she must rely upon me. I readily consented, glad of so pleasant an opportunity to study at my leisure the many rare objects of interest that I had seen there on a hurried visit the previous day.

Her plans, as she informed me, were already made. The doorkeeper in charge, who was directed to afford her every assistance in his power, had allowed her to make what arrangement she chose; and to avoid the trouble and responsibility of keeping and delivering up the keys of the hall door and the great gate, we were to find egress through the rear entrance of the house, where a door opened upon a court, and was fastened only by a spring lock. There, as she had arranged, a carriage was to come for us at an appointed hour, and wait until we should appear with the finished painting. As the daylight would soon leave that eastern room, where she must work, a goodly supply of candles was to furnish light when needed; and these could be set in the chandelier, made for such means of illumination, and which hung, fortunately, so as to throw a strong, full light upon the picture. This friend Jeannette is an energetic little body, and forgets nothing; for in all the journeys and labors into which her art studies have led her, she has been used to looking out for herself.

By means of the pass she had provided, I obtained admission to the house at the appointed hour, and found my friend already in the library, making ready with brushes and pallette, and impatient for the people to be gone. She had not long to wait. The stately policemen, who had stood on guard all day in the different rooms, soon cleared them of their occupants and departed themselves; the auctioneer's clerks, who had been verifying their lists for the next day's sale, went their ways, and finally, the trusty doorkeeper,

after seeing that all windows were secure, came to announce that he was ready to go, and that he should now deliver the house into our care, charging us to see that the door opening upon the court was firmly closed whenever we should leave. We went down to it to make sure that it was all right; and when we saw the keeper depart, locking the hall door behind him and swinging the gates together and fastening them with a great noise, we rejoiced that we had at length the house to ourselves.

We thought best, however, to make a hurried tour of the rooms, to see that nobody had been left behind, and that everything was as it should be, before we settled down to the evening's work. So passing up the broad oaken staircase, past the white marble vase on the landing, and the great square of Gobelin tapestry stretched upon the high wall, to the gallery above, we traversed the empty chambers, peering hastily as we went, behind the damask curtains that shrouded the beds, and into all corners and closets, after the manner of women when out upon such exploring expeditions. Then descending, we glanced through the open doors into the grand cordon of gorgeous apartments that constituted the ground floor, thronged a few moments ago with bustling crowds, but now as orderly, as silent and deserted as if nothing had occurred during the past week to disturb the hush and gloom that had reigned there for twenty long years.

Once more in the library, I busied myself with looping back the heavy velvet curtains from the windows, that no ray of light might be lost; while my companion seated herself at her easel, before the glorious Delilah, and was soon absorbed in the work. The face and shoulders of her copy were already finished, and wonderfully like, but the drapery was still only an outline. Not to disturb her, I proceeded quietly to examine the contents of our room. It was not an attractive apartment. You remember the dull, dark paper, the dingy green velvet draperies, the demoralized steel chandelier. The great picture of the ascending archangel, beside the carved fire-frame, was not cheerful to contemplate, neither was a large and very unpleasant looking soup plate, fastened to the wall, said to be of majolica, and attributed, from some old spite perhaps, to Caffagido.

Several ancient breastplates and shields, girt about with divers diabolical weapons, appeared above the book-cases, beyond my reach. To inspect the mineral case was to stand in Jeannette's precious light; and some magnificent wood carving, which I remembered as adorning the panels of a cabinet, and a number of curious old miniatures, were all placed directly under the Rubens picture, and therefore too near the artist to admit of close examination.

I resolved to extend my observations to the other rooms, particularly as I wished to study the Sevres china, about which I had been informing myself since my first visit. After setting up the candles in the shaky chandelier, preparatory to a grand illumination when their light should be needed, I informed my friend that I was just starting out on a tour of observation and discovery through the lower rooms.

"Perhaps," I added, "I may come across a comfortable looking sofa on the way, and conclude to take a little nap on my own account; so don't mind if I fail to put in an appearance for the next hour. I shall be on hand whenever you want me. Just whistle and I'll come unto you, my love;" and laughing I departed, closing the door behind me, but going back to tell Jeannette to be sure to draw the thick curtains well together, and to shut both doors tightly, if she should touch off the candles before my return, otherwise the unusual light in the deserted mansion might alarm the outer world. Promising on my part not to go beyond call, and on no account to stray off into the chambers above, I left her painting in the folds of Delilah's mantle as if minutes were never so precious.

I found myself then in the salon, which was curtained with yellow damask. Although the sun must have already set, the great parlors before me, stretched one beyond another in a gorgeous vista, were bright with numberless reflections from mirrors and candelabras, gilded panels, sheeny satins and lustrous chandeliers. These rooms, which in the garish daylight, when filled with a jostling crowd, had seemed to me furnished with nothing but splendid trumpery, appeared now, in their gathering shadows and soft gleamy lights, truly palatial and superb. Their loneliness and silence were painfully impressive. No sound of the distant

street penetrated their seclusion, from beyond the high, surrounding wall; no steps echoed near me as I moved, for the thick carpets muffled every sound; no ticking of a clock was heard, for every one standing on the glittering mantles had kept its hands fixed in the same spot for many a long year.

I halted a moment before the great Fragonard paintings set in the wall, to admire again those robustious young cherubs tumbling about in mid-air, irrespective of all laws of gravity, and then stepped, not without a certain reverence, into the little boudoir where were gathered together the furniture and ornaments that had once belonged to a beautiful and ill-fated queen. In such a place and at such an hour I could not help indulging in a bit of revery. In these very chairs Marie Antoinette had sat, on these silken curtains of embroidered damask her hand had perhaps rested, as she drew them back to gaze from her palace window, and on this scarlet satin lounge she may have lain for a noontide siesta, after her charming peasant-play at Little Trianon. This exquisite jewel box may have held the veritable diamond necklace over which she had cause to shed so many tears. Her husband's sister, the Princess Elizabeth, looked down from a medallion on the wall, and the Princess Lamballe seemed smiling straight into my eyes from under her rakish little hat. Certainly all three had bent some day over this centre-table to admire its inlaid Sevres, and, no doubt, they studied with interest the portraits of themselves fixed in the backs of these tiny chairs. I gazed with delight at a painting of frolicsome cherubs balancing on a tree-bole, over the door, and nearly dislocated my neck to inspect several others of the same race waltzing on the ceiling around the rod of a chandelier, whose graceful basket of golden lilies depended between a cloud of pinioned butterflies. What a pity, thought I, that all the dainty furnishings of this pretty boudoir, after having been kept together for so many years, in fact ever since they were owned by the daughter of Maria Theresa, eighty odd years ago, must be scattered to-morrow to the four winds, under the hammer of an auctioneer!

I stepped out at length into the Montmorenci salon, all aglitter with green and gold, and hurried across to

the dining-room, to inspect the famous dishes there, before it was too dark to behold them well. The great paintings that covered the walls were fast sinking into gloom. Making my way to the case of marvellous china, presented to the French Queen as the gift of a city, I removed the glass frame that protected it, and lifted each cup from its niche in the satin case, that I might examine the exquisite paintings. Then I surveyed the Sevres plates, with the portrait of a court beauty in the centre, the finger bowls and wine glasses of pale Bohemian in the curious sideboard, and all the odd little tea sets and ungainly dishes ranged around in the cases. These plates and cups of fragile china had outlived the emperors and queens who had eaten and drank from them at forgotten banquets, and even a generation or two of American republicans after their time.

It was now so dark that I must abandon further explorations and put all things in order again. But I found it impossible to replace the heavy glass frame over the Sevres service, so I left it on the floor till Jeannette could come to help me. Other and more mysterious hands, however, were destined to restore it to its proper place.

No sound had come from the library since I left it. Jeannette must be getting along famously; I thought it were best not to disturb her. Coming back into the Montmorenci parlor, and remarking again what an eye that family had for splendor and gilding, I concluded to while away the time by taking a nap. Bringing two pieces of rich costuming from a number lying upon the billiard table in the next room, that they might serve as a protection from the growing chilliness of the air, I made myself comfortable upon one of the green satin sofas that stood in a corner opposite the door of the little boudoir. Truly, I muttered to myself, this is not bad; ensconced in the salon of the Montmorencis, in sight of a queen's boudoir, with one of King Louis's waistcoats and the mantle of a Spanish grandee for wrappings, I may content myself for awhile. Musing upon the days when these rooms were crowded with guests, the lights all ablaze, the windows open into a bower of blossoming plants, gentlemen clinking

their wine glasses and ladies fluttering their fans, I fell, at length, soundly asleep.

How long I remained there, I do not know, but when at length I awoke it seemed to be from a deep sleep, and everything about me appeared shrouded in the gloom of night. It was not too dark, however, for me to see across the room where I lay, and dimly to discern the other apartments beyond. A wind had arisen since I slept, for there came to my ear a sound from without, like the swaying of tree boughs; and now and then a fitful light stole into the window, flashing for an instant across the gilded panels, and gleaming from the hundred crystal pendants of a great chandelier. Then all grew dark as before. I knew that the moon was up and struggling through a driving rack of clouds, though from where I lay I could see neither moon nor sky. The profound hush about me was only intensified by the sound of the wind and the steady dripping of the snow upon the conservatory roof.

I comprehended at once that I had overslept myself, and that my friend must, by this time have finished her work and be ready to depart. But not a ray of light nor a sound came through that distant library door. I was rising to make my way towards it, when a continuous noise arrested my attention, as regular as the snow dropping, but much finer and nearer. I listened; it certainly was the ticking of a clock in this very room. A streak of moonlight that fell just then upon the wall showed me that the gilded hands of the mantel clock were actually moving. This was so strange that I closed my eyes quickly and opened them wide, to convince myself that I was awake.

Soon the room was in shadow again, deeper than before, and the dial no longer visible, but the ticking continued. Rising on my elbow, I was proceeding to gather up the mantle that had fallen to the carpet, when I became conscious that in the boudoir opposite, behind the narrow curtained doorway, a faint light was shining, a light steadier than the moonlight and not so pale. No lamp was to be seen there; but keeping silent and motionless—for by this time I was lost in wonder at what all this could mean—I was sure I heard a soft rustling, and then a noise like the opening of a

box-lid or of a cabinet door. Of course, I reflected, it can only be Jeannette, who has come in there with a candle, and is standing intent about something beside the door. I called her name. Instead of a reply there was an instant hush. I strained my ears, but could hear only the tick, tick of the clock and the fancied echoes of my own voice dying away in the farthest rooms. For some moments this breathless hush continued. Now if my friend be playing me a trick I may as well discover it at once, thought I, making bold to advance towards the boudoir and see for myself who this unseen occupant might be. But scarcely had I risen, when the same sharp click struck upon my ear, as though a small door had been shut, and then the rustling began again. I held my breath in a wondering fear. Through the arch of the little curtained doorway, I could see the mantle-mirror that hung opposite, and into its depths there moved the reflection of something like an antique lamp, burning at the tip, and held high by a white hand. A portion of the sleeve was visible at the wrist. This was no Jeannette—who else could be there? I sank back upon the sofa, incapable of any motion or thought save this, that some other being besides ourselves was shut up in this dark, deserted mansion.

Then, from a hidden corner near the doorway, there glided out in the centre of the boudoir the figure of a woman, tall and dressed in ancient fashion, with a rich, flowered brocade sweeping the floor and rustling as she went. Her face was not visible, for she was moving away from me towards the mantle, and the tiny lamp glimmering above her head seemed to throw her figure beneath into shadow while it cast a faint light around. She paused, as if surveying the two portraits on the wall before her, and then, while I was trembling lest some involuntary movement of mine should attract her attention, she passed suddenly out of sight through a door communicating with another salon beyond. I watched intently for her reappearance but she remained there a long while, without my being able to detect the slightest sound or flicker of light in the adjoining rooms.

The entrance hall, containing the great staircase, occupied a remote corner of the house; and beneath it

and the parlor into which this being or vision had departed, stretched the billiard room, which had been dim even at twilight, with its closed blinds, and now that no ray of the moon penetrated into the other apartments, it was wrapped in darkness. While I was staring into its depths, and debating if I had not better attempt to pick my way through it and escape to the library, the figure crossed my sight again, moving along the farthest side of the billiard room in the direction of the hall. Her face, as I beheld it dimly in profile, for the lamp was well-nigh extinguished, shone pale and sad, and she looked straight before her as she walked. But just as she was passing from view, she turned her eyes full upon me, and raised her hand with a commanding gesture toward the door. In an instant she had vanished and I heard the rustling dying away upon the staircase. When it had wholly ceased, I flew to the room where, hours ago, I had left my friend.

And there I found the busy little maid, in the soft blaze of a dozen candles, wiping her brushes and pointing triumphantly to her finished painting. She started at seeing the expression on my face but soon burst into merry laughter, and before I could find breath to explain myself, dragged me before a mirror to behold the strange rig in which I was arrayed. An old fashioned waistcoat, bespangled with silken pansies, into which I had thrust my arms before taking the nap, and which I had since forgotten, was buttoned well up to the chin, and a high collar, stiff with embroidery, was standing about my ears and threatening to engulf the chignon behind. Above this appeared a pallid face and eyes set wide. I had to smile, in spite of the untold wonder I had seen; and indeed, the brightly lighted room, the sight of Jeannette, and the sound of her merry voice were wonderfully reassuring after my lonesome experience.

I first asked her if it was not nearly midnight, and she assured me that it was by no means so late as that, adding that it was plain to her I had been masquerading with ghosts out there, and had lost my wits. With some effort I related all I had seen. She only laughed the more, asserting that I had been half

asleep, and that this strange being, whoever she might be, was only a creature of my imagining.

"Were you not conjuring up all kinds of fancies before you fell asleep?" she asked.

"Perhaps so," I rejoined, "but this was no dream, I am sure."

But I have been awake all the while and have heard nothing. I remember that my door opened suddenly in the early evening, without apparent cause, and I got up and looked out, but discovered only yourself fast asleep on a distant sofa. I closed it and returned to my work; but a moment after it opened wider than before. Then I concluded that a window was left open somewhere in the house, and that the wind rising had blown the door back. I shut it again and thought no more about it. If your wandering, lady-like ghost came to look in upon me, I did not see her, and this house is not one of the kind to be haunted, for it has scarcely ever been inhabited by living people. But come," she added, "the carriage must have been waiting for us a long while; put this out of your mind and let us make ready to go."

I recollected the glass frame belonging over the Sevres china, that I had left on the dining-room floor, and knew it must be replaced.

Looking out, we saw that the rooms were now bright with moonlight, and together we started upon this errand. As we went by the clock in the Montmorenci salon, its hands were still in motion. On reaching the dining-room the frame which we had come to lift appeared set in its proper place. I looked at my friend and saw that she was beginning to share my amazement, but we said nothing. Passing the hall door on our return, I could not refrain from glancing up to the Gobelin tapestry that hung over the staircase, for it was lighted by the full moon that shone in through an unseen window on the gallery above. The central figure of Victory looked out regal and smiling; but, as we paused a moment to behold it, a shadow like that of a woman fell upon it, wavering and floating across from one side to the other, and then vanishing. Neither spoke a word as we returned to the library, but to take up the painting-case and canvas, extin-

guish and remove the candles, loop back the curtains and depart to the flight of stairs leading down from the hall to the rear entrance, was the work of a few seconds.

Through the side lights we saw the carriage waiting; and there was our faithful Jehu, with his blanketed horses drawn up to the door, and himself sitting motionless upon his box and half asleep in the shadow of the great house. Soon the outer door was closed tightly behind us, and we were whirling around the square, into the lighted street. I glanced back at the mansion we had left, but the moon, freed from her clouds, was flooding its front with a peaceful light, and, if any unearthly visitants were roaming then through the deserted upper chambers, no signs of disturbance appeared at its casements. The breeze had died away, and within the garden wall the black shadows of leafless trees stretched motionless across the untrodden snow. We spoke on the way home of what we had seen, and agreed to say nothing about it to others, until we had taken time to think it over and account for it to ourselves, if that might be possible. This is the first time I have related it to any one, but, though a week has passed, it appears to me as strange, as inexplicable as ever.

Such is the story that was told me last night, as I sat with a friend by the light of her evening fire, listening to the "keening" of the wind without. I give it, with all its minuteness, in her very words. Do I vouch myself for its truth? Not at all. I do not believe in ghosts nor haunted houses—the more's the pity—but, when looking into her eyes and witnessing the emotion with which she recalled that evening's adventure, I could not doubt the reality of what she told. When she had closed, we sat a moment in thought. I asked her, at length, if the figure she had seen could not have been one of the old servants who had returned to the house to recover some forgotten article, and had entered by a door unknown to her. She replied that it was no servant, she was certain of that.

"And you and your companion could not have imagined what you saw?"

"Impossible."

"Then, surely, you believe in ghosts?"

"No, I cannot admit that I do."

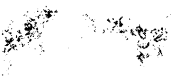
"But you are aware that one or other of these suppositions must be true?"

"Well, it may be; but you shall choose for yourself."

ADAM FLOYD.

BY

MARY J. HOLMES.



Mary J. Holmes.

MARY J. HOLMES.

THE four American novelists who have made the largest sums from their writings are Mrs. Stowe, Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson, and Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth. Mrs. Holmes has been a prolific and a popular author, and her success has been uninterruptedly great.

She was Miss Hawes, a niece of the Rev. Dr. Joel Hawes, a literary man, and forty years ago a popular writer.

Shortly after her marriage to Mr. Daniel Holmes, a young lawyer, she wrote her first novel, "Tempest and Sunshine," and subsequently a story called "English Orphans." In 1863 appeared her famous novel, "Lena Rivers," which had a great sale. This was followed in quick succession by twenty more works of fiction, all of which have sold largely. Mrs. Holmes enjoys an income ranging from ten to fifteen thousand dollars a year.

From her schooldays she believed herself born to be a writer of romance, but had at first little encouragement from those about her. To her schoolmates she always said she should write a book just as soon as she grew up, and when they would laugh at her and jeer her she would repeat her declaration with renewed earnestness. She has spent her life since that time writing novels which not only her schoolmates but a great public have read.

Mrs. Holmes resides in an attractive home at Brockport, N. Y. Her family consists of her husband and herself only, but her social circle is a large one and her popularity is such that were she not a writer she would be a society leader. She is a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church and is an active worker, having charge of the infant class of the Sunday School, and doing much mission and charity duty.

As she is the wealthiest woman of her town her name is found among the foremost donors to all public institutions and local charities.

Mrs. Holmes delights in travel and has spent a great deal of time in Europe. "Brown Cottage," the name of her home, is closed whenever one of her restless moods comes upon her and she and her husband go away and roam until both are weary and desire to be at home again.

The publishers of her novels attribute their great success to her natural and graceful style, and to the purity and high moral tone of her writings. She does not pander to the demand for sensationalism, and has no hobbies. Her books are wholesome ones to read, and the public is evidently pleased to read them. Mrs. Holmes is a very earnest and gifted woman, conscientiousness being a very marked attribute of her character.

ADAM FLOYD.

It was the warmest day of the season, and from the moment when the first robin chirped in the maple tree growing by the door, to the time when the shadows stretching eastward indicated that the sultry afternoon was drawing to a close, Adam Floyd had been busy. Indeed, he could not remember a day when he had worked so continuously and so hard, neither could he recall a time when he had been so perfectly happy, except upon one starlight night when last winter's snow was piled upon the ground. The events of that night had seemed to him then like a dream, and they were scarcely more real now, when pausing occasionally in his work and leaning his head upon his broad, brown hands, he tried to recall just the awkward words he had spoken and the graceful answer she had given; answer so low that he would hardly have known she was speaking, had not his face been so near to hers that he could hear the murmured response.

"I am not half good enough for you, Adam, and shall make a sorry wife; but, if you will take me with all my faults, I am yours."

That is what she had said, the only she in all the world to Adam Floyd, now that the churchyard grass was growing over the poor old blind mother, to whom he had been the tenderest, best of sons, and who had said to him when dying,

"I'm glad I'm going home, my boy, for now you can bring Anna here. She is a bonny creature, I know by the sound of her voice and the touch of her silky hair. Tell her how with my last breath I blessed her, and how glad I was to think that when she came, the old blind woman's chair would be empty, and that she would be spared a heavy burden which she is far too young to bear. God deal by her as she deals by you, my noble boy."

The March winds were blowing when they made his mother's grave, and Adam's heart was not as sore now as on that dismal, rainy night, when he first sat alone in his little cottage and missed the groping hand feeling for his own. Anna was coming within a week, Anna who had said, "I am not half good enough for you." How the remembrance of these words even now brought a smile to the lips where the sweat drops were standing as he toiled for her, putting the last finishing strokes to the home prepared for his future bride, Anna Burroughs, the Deacon's only daughter, the fairest maiden in all the goodly town of Rhodes—Anna, who had been away to school for a whole year, who could speak another language than her own, whose hands were soft and white as wool, whom all the village lads coveted, and at whom it was rumored even Herbert Dunallen, the heir of Castlewild, where Adam worked so much, had cast admiring glances. Not good enough for him? She was far too good for a great burly fellow like himself, a poor mechanic, who had never looked into the Algebras and Euclids piled on Anna's table the morning after she came from school. This was what Adam thought, wondering why she had chosen him, and if she were not sorry. Sometimes of late he had fancied a coldness in her manner, a shrinking from his caresses; but the very idea had made his great, kind heart throb with a pang so keen that he had striven to banish it, for to lose his darling now would be worse than death. He had thought it all over that August day, when he nailed down the bright new carpet in what was to be her room. "Our room," he said softly to himself, as he watched his coadjutor, old Aunt Martha Eastman, smoothing and arranging the snowy pillows upon the nicely made up bed, and looping with bows of pure white satin the muslin curtains which shaded the pretty bay window. That window was his own handiwork. He had planned and built it himself, for Anna was partial to bay windows. He had heard her say so once when she came up to Castlewild where he was making some repairs, and so he had made her two, one in the bedroom, and one in the pleasant parlor looking out upon the little garden full of flowers. Adam's *taste* was perfect, and many a passer by stopped to

admire the bird's nest cottage, peeping out from its thick covering of ivy leaves and flowering vines. Adam was pleased with it himself, and when the last tack had been driven and the last chair set in its place, he went over it alone admiring as he went, and wondering how it would strike Anna. Would her soft blue eyes light up with joy, or would they wear the troubled look he had sometimes observed in them? "If they do," and Adam's breath came hard as he said it, and his hands were locked tightly together, "if they do, I'll lead her into mother's room; she won't deceive me there. I'll tell her that I would not take a wife who does not love me; that though to give her up is like tearing out my heart, I'll do it if she says so, and Anna will answer—"

Adam did not know what, and the very possibility that she might answer, as he sometimes feared, paled his bronzed cheek, and made him reel, as, walking to his blind mother's chair, he knelt beside it, and prayed earnestly for grace to bear the happiness or sorrow there might be in store for him. In early youth, Adam had learned the source of all true peace, and now in every perplexity, however trivial, he turned to God, who was pledged to care for the child, trusting so implicitly in him.

"If it is right for Anna to be mine, give her to me, but, if she has sickened of me, oh Father, help me to bear."

This was Adam's prayer, and when it was uttered, the pain and dread were gone, and the child-like man saw no cloud lowering on his horizon.

It was nearly time for him to be going now, if he would have Anna see the cottage by daylight, and hastening to the chamber he had occupied since he was a boy, he put on, not his wedding suit, for that was safely locked in his trunk, but his Sunday clothes, feeling a pardonable thrill of satisfaction when he saw how much he was improved by dress. Not that Adam Floyd was ever ill-looking. A stranger would have singled him out from a thousand. Tall, straight and firmly built, with the flush of perfect health upon his frank, open face, and the sparkle of intelligence in his dark brown eyes, he represented a rare type of manly beauty. He was looking uncommonly well, too, this

afternoon, old Martha thought, as from the kitchen door she watched him passing down the walk and out into the road which led to the red farm-house, where Deacon Burroughs lived, and where Anna was waiting for him.

Waiting for him, we said, but not exactly as Adam Floyd should have been waited for. Never had a day seemed so long to her as that which to Adam had passed so quickly. Restless and wretched she had wandered many times from the garden to the brook, from the brook back to the garden, and thence to her own little chamber, from whose window, looking southward could be seen the chimney of the cottage, peeping through the trees. At this she looked often and long, trying to silence the faithful monitor within, whispering to her of the terrrible desolation which would soon fall upon the master of that cottage, if she persisted in her cruel plan. Then she glanced to the northward, where, from the hill top, rose the pretentious walls of Castlewild, whose young heir had come between her and her affianced husband; then she compared them, one with the other—Adam Floyd with Herbert Dunallen—one the rich proprietor of Castlewild, the boyish man just of age, who touched his hat so gracefully, as in the summer twilight he rode in his handsome carriage past her father's door, the youth, whose manners were so elegant, and whose hands were so white; the other, a mechanic, a carpenter by trade, who worked sometimes at Castlewild—a man unversed in etiquette as taught in fashion's school, and who could neither dress, nor dance, nor flatter, nor bow as could Dunallen, but who she knew was tenfold more worthy of her esteem. Alas, for Anna; though our heroine, she was but a foolish thing, who suffered fancy to rule her better judgment, and let her heart turn more willingly to the picture of Dunallen than to that of honest Adam Floyd, hastening on to join her.

"If he were not so good," she thought, as with a shudder she turned away from the pretty little workbox he had brought her; "if he had ever given me an unkind word, or suspected how treacherous I am, it would not seem so bad, but he trusts me so much!

Oh, Adam, I wish we had never met!" and hiding her face in her hands, poor Anna weeps passionately.

There was a hand upon the gate, and Anna knew whose step it was coming so cheerfully up the walk, and wondered if it would be as light and buoyant when she was gone. She heard him in their little parlor, talking to her mother, and, as she listened, the tones of his voice fell soothingly upon her ear, for there was music in the voice of Adam Floyd, and more than Anna had felt its quieting influence. It seemed cruel to deceive him so dreadfully, and in her sorrow Anna sobbed out,

"Oh, what must I do?" Once she thought to pray, but she could not do that now. She had not prayed aright since that first June night when she met young Herbert down in the beech grove, and heard him speak jestingly of her lover, saying "she was far too pretty and refined for such an odd old cove." It had struck her then that this cognomen was not exactly refined, that Adam Floyd would never have called Dunallen thus, but Herbert's arm was round her waist, where only Adam's had a right to rest. Herbert's eyes were bent fondly upon her, and so she forgave the insult to her affianced husband, and tried to laugh at the joke. That was the first open act, but since then she had strayed very far from the path of duty, until now she had half promised to forsake Adam Floyd and be Dunallen's bride. That very day, just after sunset, he would be waiting in the beech wood grove for her final decision. No wonder that with this upon her mind she shrank from meeting her lover, whom she knew to be the soul of truth and honor. And yet she must school herself to go with him over the house he had prepared for her with so much pride and care. Once there she would tell him, she thought, how the love she once bore him had died out from her heart. She would not speak of Herbert Dunallen but she would ask to be released, and he, the generous, unselfish man, would do her bidding.

Anna had faith in Adam's goodness, and this it was which nerved her at the last to wash the tear-stains from her face and rearrange the golden curls falling about her forehead. "He'll know I've been crying," she said, "but that will pave the way to what I have to

tell him;" and with one hasty glance at the fair young face which Adam thought so beautiful, she ran lightly down the stairs, glad that her mother was present when she first greeted Adam. But the mother, remembering her own girlish days, soon left the room, and the lovers were alone.

"What is it, darling? Are you sick?" and Adam's broad palm rested caressingly upon the bowed head of Anna, who could not meet his earnest glance for shame.

She said something about being nervous and tired because of the excessive heat, and then, steadying her voice, she continued:

"You have come for me to see the cottage, I suppose. We will go at once, as I must return before it's dark."

Her manner troubled him, but he made no comment until they were out upon the highway, when he said to her timidly, "If you are tired, perhaps you would not mind taking my arm. Folks will not talk about it, now we are so near being one."

Anna could not take his arm, so she replied: "Somebody might gossip; I'd better walk alone," and coquettishly swinging the hat she carried instead of wore, she walked by his side silently, save when he addressed her directly. Poor Adam! there were clouds gathering around his heart, blacker far than the dark rift rising so rapidly in the western sky. There was something the matter with Anna more than weariness or heat, but he would not question her there, and so a dead silence fell between them until the cottage was reached, and standing with her on the threshold of the door, he said, mournfully, but oh! so tenderly, "Does my little Blossom like the home I have prepared for her, and is she willing to live here with me?"

She seemed to him so fair, so pure, so like the apple blossoms of early June, that he often called her his little Blossom, but now there was a touching pathos in the tones of his voice as he repeated the pet name, and it wrung from Anna a gush of tears. Lifting her blue eyes to his for an instant, she laid her head upon his arm and cried piteously:

"Oh, Adam, you are so good, so much better than I deserve. Yes, I like it, so much."

Was it a sense of his goodness which made her cry, or was it something else? Adam wished he knew, but he would rather she should tell him of her own accord, and winding his arm around her, he lifted up her head and wiping her tears away, kissed her gently, saying, "Does Blossom like to have me kiss her?"

She did not, but she could not tell him so when he bent so fondly over her, his face all aglow with the mighty love he bore her. Affecting not to hear his question she broke away from his embrace and seating herself in the bay window, began talking of its pretty effect from the road, and the great improvement it was to the cottage. Still she did not deceive Adam Floyd, who all the while her playful remarks were sounding in his ears was nerving himself to a task he meant to perform. But not in any of the rooms he had fitted up for her could he say that if she would have it so she was free from him, even though the bridal was only a week in advance and the bridal guests were bidden. Only in one room, his dead mother's, could he tell her this. That had been to him a Bethel since his blind mother left it. Its walls had witnessed most of his secret sorrows and joys, and there, if it must be, he would break his heart by giving Anna up.

"I did not change mother's room," he said, leading Anna to the arm-chair where none had sat since an aged, withered form, last rested there. "I'd rather see it as it used to be when she was here, and I thought you would not mind."

"It is better to leave it so," Anna said, while Adam continued,

"I'm glad you like our home. I think myself it is pleasant, and so does every one. Even Dunallen complimented it very highly."

"Dunallen; has he been here?" and Anna blushed painfully.

But Adam was not looking at her. He had never associated the heir of Castlewild with Anna's changed demeanor, and wholly unconscious of the pain he was inflicting, he went on.

"He went all over the house this morning, except indeed in here. I could not admit him to the room

where mother died. Did I tell you that he had hired me for a long and profitable job? He is going to make some repairs at Castlewild before he brings home his bride. You know he is engaged to a young heiress, Mildred Atherton."

It was well for Anna that her face was turned from Adam as she replied,

"Yes, I've heard something of an engagement made by the family when he was a mere boy. I thought perhaps he had tired of it."

"Oh, no; he told me only to-day that he expected to bring his wife to Castlewild as early as Christmas. We were speaking of you and our marriage."

"Of me?" and Anna looked up quickly, but poor, deluded Adam, mistook her guilty flush for a kind of grateful pride that Dunallen should talk of her.

"He said you were the prettiest girl he ever saw, and when I suggested, "except Miss Atherton," he added, 'I will not except any one; Milly is pretty, but not like your *fiancée*.'"

Anna had not fallen so low that she could not see how mean and dastardly it was for Herbert Dunallen to talk thus of her to the very man he was intending to wrong so cruelly; and for a moment a life with Adam Floyd looked more desirable than a life with Herbert Dunallen, even though it were spent in the midst of elegance of which she had never dreamed. Anna's good angel was fast gaining the ascendency, and might have triumphed had not the sound of horses' feet just then met her ear, and looking from the window she saw Herbert Dunallen riding by, his dark curls floating in the wind and his cheek flushing with exercise. He saw her, too, and quickly touching his cap, pointed adroitly towards the beechwood grove. With his disappearance over the hill her good angel flew away, and on her face there settled the same cold, unhappy look, which had troubled Adam so much.

"Darling," he said, when he spoke again, "there is something on your mind which I do not understand. If you are to be my wife, there should be no secrets between us. Will you tell me what it is, and if I can help you I will, even though—though—"

His voice began to falter, for the white, hard look on Anna's face frightened him, and at last in an agony of

terror, he grasped both her hands in his and added impetuously:

"Even though it be to give you up, you whom I love better than my life—for whom I would die so willingly. Oh, Anna!" and he sank on his knees beside her, and winding his arms around her waist, looked her imploringly in the face. "I sometimes fear that you have sickened of me—that you shrink from my caresses. If it is so, in mercy tell me now, before it is too late; for, Anna, dear as you are to me, I would rather to-morrow's sunshine should fall upon your grave and mine, than take you to my bosom an unloving wife! I have worked for you, early and late, thinking only how you might be pleased. There is not a niche or corner in my home that is not hallowed by thoughts of you whom I have loved since you were a little child and I carried you in the arms which now would be your resting place forever. I know I am not your equal, I feel it painfully, but I can learn with you as my teacher, and, my precious Anna, whatever I may lack in polish, I *will*, I *will* make up in kindness!"

He was pleading now for her love, forgetting that she was his promised wife—forgetting everything, save that to his words of passionate appeal there came no answering response in the expression of her face. Only the same fixed, stony look, which almost maddened him; it was so unlike what he deserved and had reason to expect.

"I shall be lonely without you, Anna—more lonely than you can guess, for there is no mother here now to bless and cheer me as she would have cheered me in my great sorrow. She loved you, Anna, and blessed you with her dying breath, saying she was glad for your sake, that the chair where you sit would be empty when you came, and asking God to deal by you even as you dealt by me."

"Oh, Adam, Adam!" Anna gasped, for what had been meant for a blessing rang in her ears like that blind woman's curse. "May God deal better by me than I meant to deal by you!" she tried to say, but the words died on her lips, and she could only lay her cold hands on the shoulder of him who still knelt before her, with his arms around her waist.

Softly, gladly came the good angel back, and 'mid a

rain of tears which dropped on Adam's hair, Anna wept her hardness all away, while the only sound heard in the room was the beating of two hearts and the occasional roll of thunder muttering in the distance. In reality it was only a few moments, but to Anna it seemed a long, long time that they sat thus together, her face bent down upon his head, while she thought of all the past since she could remember Adam Floyd and the blind old woman, his mother. He had been a dutiful son, Anna knew, for she had heard how tenderly he would bear his mother in his strong arms or guide her uncertain steps, and how at the last he sat by her night after night, never wearying of the tiresome vigil until it was ended, and the sightless eyes, which in death turned lovingly to him, were opened to the light of Heaven. To such as Adam Floyd the commandment of promise was rife with meaning. God would prolong his days and punish those who wronged him. He who had been so faithful to his mother, would be true to his wife—aye, truer far than young Dunallen, with all his polish and wealth.

"Adam," Anna began at last, so low that he scarcely could hear her. "Adam, forgive me all that is past. I have been cold and indifferent, have treated you as I ought not, but I am young and foolish, I—I —oh! Adam, I mean to do better. I—"

She could not say, "will banish Dunallen from my mind"—it was not necessary to mention him, she thought; but some explanation must be made, and so, steadying her voice, she told him how dearly she had loved him once, thinking there was not in all the world his equal, but that during the year at a city school she had acquired some foolish notions and had sometimes wished her lover different.

"Not better at heart. You could not be that," she said, looking him now fully in the face, for she was conscious of meaning what she said, "but—but—"

"You need not finish it, darling; I know what you mean," Adam said, the cloud lifting in a measure from his brow. "I am not refined one bit, but my Blossom is, and she shall teach me, I will try hard to learn. I will not often make her ashamed. I will even imitate *Dunallen*, if that will gratify my darling."

Why would he keep bringing in that name, when the

sound of it was so like a dagger to Anna's heart, and when she wished she might never hear it again? He was waiting for her now in the beech woods she knew, for she was to join him there ere long, not to say what she would have said an hour ago, but to say that she could not, would not wrong the noble man who held her to his bosom so lovingly as he promised to copy *Dunallen*. And as Anna suffered him to caress her, she felt her olden love coming back. She should be happy with him—happier far than if she were the mistress of Castlewild, and knew that to attain that honor she had broken Adam's heart.

"As a proof that you trust me fully," she said, as the twilight shadows deepened around them, "you must let me go home alone, I wish it for a special reason. You must not tell me no," and the pretty lips touched his bearded cheek.

Adam wanted to walk with her down the pleasant road, where they had walked so often, but he saw she was in earnest, and so he suffered her to depart alone, watching her until the flutter of her light dress was lost to view. Then kneeling by the chair where she had sat so recently, he asked that the cup of joy, placed again in his eager hand, might not be wrested from him, that he might prove worthy of Anna's love, and that no cloud should ever again come between them.

Herbert Dunallen had waited there a long time, as he thought, and he began to grow impatient. What business had Anna to stay with that old fellow, if she did not mean to have him, and of course she did not. It would be a mosf preposterous piece of business for a girl like Anna to throw herself away upon such as Adam Floyd, carpenter by trade, and general repairer of things at Castlewild. Whew-ew! and Herbert whistled contemptuously, adding in a low voice, "and yet my lady mother would raise a beautiful rumpus if she knew I was about to make this little village rustic her daughter-in-law. For I am; if there's one redeeming trait in my character, it's being honorable in my intentions toward Anna. Most men in my position would only trifle with her, particularly when there was in the background a Mildred Atherton, dreadfully in love with them. I wonder what makes all the girls admire me so?" and the vain young man stroked his

mustache complacently, just as a rapid footstep sounded near.

It was Anna's, and the next moment he held her in his arms. But she would not suffer him to keep her there, and with a quiet dignity which for an instant startled him beyond the power to speak or act, she put his arm away, and standing apart from him, told him of her resolution, and reproached him with his duplicity, asking him how he could tell Adam that he was about to be married.

"Because I am," he replied. "I am not to blame for his believing silly little Milly to be the bride elect. Won't it be famous, though, for you to order round your former lover? I've engaged him for a long job, and you ought to have seen how glad he was of the work, thinking, of course, how much he should earn for you. I came near laughing in his face when he hoped I should be as happy with Miss Mildred as he expected to be with you."

"You shan't speak so of Adam Floyd!" and Anna's little foot beat the ground impatiently, while indignant tears glittered in her blue eyes as she again reiterated that Adam Floyd should be her husband.

"Not while I live!" Herbert responded almost fiercely, for he saw in her manner a determination he had never witnessed before.

As well as he was capable of doing he loved Anna Burroughs, and the fact that she was pledged to another added fuel to the flame.

"What new freak has taken my fickle goddess?" he asked, looking down upon her with a mocking sneer about his mouth as she told him why she could not go with him.

He knew she was in earnest at last, and, dropping his jesting tone, he made her sit down beside him, while he used every possible argument to dissuade her from her purpose, working first upon her pride, flattering her vanity, portraying the happiness of a tour through Europe, a winter in Paris, and lastly touching upon the advantages of being lady supreme at Castlewild, with a house in the city, for winter. And as changeable, ambitious Anna listened, she felt her resolution giving way, felt the ground which she had

taken slipping from beneath her feet without one effort to save herself.

"It seems terrible to wrong Adam," she said, and by the tone of her voice, Herbert knew the victory was two thirds won.

"Adam will do well enough," he replied. "People like him never die of broken hearts! He's a good fellow, but not the one for you; besides, you know he's what they call pious, just like Milly; and, I presume, he'll say it was not so wicked for you to cheat him as to perjure yourself, as you surely would, by promising to love and honor and all that when you didn't feel a bit of it!"

"What was that you said of Miss Atherton?" Anna asked eagerly, for she had caught the word pious, and it made her heart throb with pain, for she knew that Herbert Dunallen could not say as much of her!

Once, indeed, it had been otherwise, but that was before she had met him in the woods,—before she ceased to pray. Oh, that happy time when she had dared to pray! How she wished it would come back to her again; but it had drifted far away, and left a void as black as the night closing around her or the heavy thunder clouds rolling above her head.

Tightly her hands clenched each other as Herbert answered jestingly.

"She's one of the religious ones, Milly is; writes me such good letters. I've one of them in my pocket now. she's coming to see me; is actually on the way, so to-morrow night, or never, my bride you must be."

"Miss Atherton coming here! What do you mean?" Anna asked, and Herbert replied,

"I mean, Mildred has always been in a fever to see Castlewild, and as she is intimate with Mrs. Judge Harcourt's family, she is coming there on a visit. Will arrive to-morrow, her note said; and will expect to see me immediately after her arrival."

Herbert's influence over Anna was too great for her to attempt to stop him, so she offered no remonstrance, when he continued!

"I suppose Milly will cry a little, for I do believe she likes me, and always has; but I can't help it.

The match was agreed upon by our families when she was twelve and I fifteen. Of course I'm awfully

sick of it, and have been ever since I knew you," and Herbert's lips touched the white brow where only half an hour before Adam Floyd's had been.

Thicker, and blacker, grew the darkness around them, while the thunder was louder and nearer, and still they sat together, Anna hesitating, while Herbert urged upon her the necessity of going with him the following night, if ever.

Mildred in the neighborhood would be as formidable an obstacle to him as Adam was to Anna, while he feared the result of another interview between the affianced pair. With all his love for Anna he was not blind to the fact that the last one with whom she talked had the better chance of eventually winning. He could not lose her now, and he redoubled his powers of persuasion, until, forgetting everything, save the handsome youth beside her, the wealthy heir of Castlewild, Anna said to him,

"I will meet you at our gate when the village clock strikes one!" and as she said the words the woods were lighted up by a flash of lightning so fearfully bright and blinding that with a scream of terror she hid her face in her lap and stopped her ears to shut out the deafening roll of the thunder. The storm had burst in all its fury, and hurrying from the woods, Herbert half carried, half led the frightened Anna across the fields in the direction of her father's door. Depositing her at the gate, he paused for an instant to whisper his parting words and then hastened rapidly on.

On the kitchen hearth a cheerful wood fire had been kindled, and making some faint excuse for having been out in the storm, Anna repaired thither, and standing before the blaze was drying her dripping garments, when a voice from the adjoining room made her start and tremble, for she knew that it was Adam's.

He seemed to be excited and was asking for her. An accident had occurred just before his door. Frightened by the lightning which Anna remembered so well, a pair of spirited horses had upset a travelling carriage, in which was a young lady and her maid. The latter had sustained no injury, but the lady's ankle was sprained, and she was otherwise so lamed and bruised that it was impossible for her to proceed any farther that night. So he had carried her into his cot-

tage and dispatching the driver for the physician had come himself for Anna as the suitable person to play the hostess in his home.

"Oh, I can't go—mother, you!" Anna exclaimed, shrinking in terror from again crossing the threshold of the home she was about to make so desolate.

But Adam preferred Anna. The lady was young, he said, and it seemed to him more appropriate that Anna should attend her. Mrs Burroughs thought so too, and, with a sinking heart, Anna prepared herself for a second visit to the cottage. In her excitement she forgot entirely to ask the name of the stranger, and as she was not disposed to talk, nothing was said of the lady until the cottage was reached and she was ushered into the dining-room, where old Martha and a smart looking servant were busy with the bandages and hot water preparing for the invalid who had been carried to the pleasant bed-room opening from the parlor.

"How is Miss Atherton?" Adam asked of Martha, while he kindly attempted to assist Anna in removing the heavy shawl her mother had wrapped around her.

"Who? What did you call her?" Anna asked, her hands dropping helplessly at her side.

"Why, I thought I told you. I surely did your mother. I beg pardon for my carelessness. It's Mildred Atherton," and Adam's voice sank to a whisper. "She was on her way to visit Mrs. Harcourt. I suppose it would be well to send for Dunallen, but I thought it hardly proper for me to suggest it. I'll let you get at it somehow, and see if she wants him. You girls have a way of understanding each other."

Knowing how, in similar circumstances, he should yearn for Anna's presence, Adam had deemed it natural that Mildred's first wish would be for Herbert, and one reason for his insisting that Anna should come back with him was the feeling that the beautiful girl, who face had interested him at once, would be more free to communicate her wishes to one of her own age.

"Mildred Atherton," Anna kept repeating to herself, every vestige of color fading from her cheeks and lips, as she wondered how she could meet her, or what the result of the meeting would be.

"Sarah, where are you? Has everybody left me?"

came from the bed, where the outline of a girlish form was plainly discernible to Anna, who started at the tones of what seemed to her the sweetest voice she had ever heard.

"Go to her," Adam whispered, and Anna mechanically obeyed.

Gliding to the bedside, she stood a moment gazing upon the beautiful face nestled among the snowy pillows. The eyes were closed, and the long, silken lashes shaded the fair, round cheek, not one half so white as Anna's, notwithstanding that a spasm of pain occasionally distorted the regular features, and wrung a faint cry from the pretty lips. Masses of soft black curls were pushed back from the forehead, and one hand lay outside the counterpane, a little soft, fat hand, on whose fourth finger shone the engagement ring, the seal of her betrothal to the heir of Castlewild! Oh, how debased and wicked Anna felt standing by that innocent girl, and how she marvelled that having known Mildred Atherton, Herbert Dunallen could ever have turned to her. Involuntarily a sigh escaped her lips, and at the sound the soft black eyes unclosed, and looked at her wonderingly. Then a smile broke over the fair face, and extending her hand to Anna, Mildred said,

"Where am I? My head feels so confused. I remember the horses reared when that flash of lightning came, the carriage was overturned, and some young man, who seemed a second Apollo in strength and beauty, brought me in somewhere so gently and carefully, that I could have hugged him for it, he was so good. Are you his sister?"

"No, I am Anna Burroughs. He came for me," Anna replied, and looking her full in the face, Mildred continued,

"Yes, I remember now, his nurse or housekeeper told me he had gone for the girl who was to be his wife; and you are she. It's pleasant to be engaged, isn't it?" and Mildred's hand gave Anna's a little confidential squeeze, which, quite as much as the words she had uttered, showed how affectionate and confiding was her disposition.

The entrance of the physician put an end to the conversation, and withdrawing to a little distance where in the shadow she could not be well observed Anna stood,

while the doctor examined the swollen ankle, and his volatile patient explained to him in detail how it all happened, making herself out quite a heroine for courage and presence of mind, asking if he knew Mrs. Harcourt, and if next morning he would not be kind enough to let her know that Mildred Atherton was at the cottage. The doctor promised whatever she asked, and was about to leave the room, when Adam stepped forward and said,

"Is there any one else whom Miss Atherton would like to see—any friend in the neighborhood who ought to be informed?"

Eagerly Anna waited for the answer, watching half jealously the crimson flush stealing over Mildred's face, as she replied,

"Not to-night; it would do no good; to-morrow is soon enough. I never like to make unnecessary trouble."

The head which had been raised while Mildred spoke to Adam lay back upon the pillow, but not until with a second thought the sweet voice had said to him,

"I thank you, sir, you are so kind."

As a creature of impulse, Anna felt a passing thrill of something like pride in Adam as Mildred Atherton spoke thus to him, and when as he passed her he involuntarily laid his hand a moment on her shoulder she did not shake it off, though her heart throbbed painfully with thoughts of her intended treachery. They were alone now, Mildred and Anna, and beckoning the latter to her side, Mildred said to her.

"He meant Herbert Dunallen. How did he know that I am to be Herbert's wife?"

There was no tremor in her voice. She spoke of Herbert as a matter of course, whlle Anna could hardly find courage to reply.

"Mr. Floyd works at Castlewild sometimes, and probably has heard Mr. Dunallen speak of you."

"Mr. Floyd—Adam Floyd, is that the young man's name?" was Mildred's next question, and when Anna answered in the affirmative, she continued, "I have heard of him. Herbert wrote how invaluable he was and how superior to most mechanics—his prime minister in fact. I am glad the accident happened here, and Herbert too will be glad."

For a moment Mildred seemed to be thinking, then starting up, she said, abruptly,

"And it was Anna—Anna Burroughs, yes, I'm sure that's the name. Would you mind putting that lamp nearer to me, and coming yourself where I can see just how you look?"

Anna shrank from the gaze of those clear, truthful eyes, but something in Mildred's manner impelled her to do as she was requested, and moving the lamp she came so near that Mildred placed a hand on either side of her burning face and gazed at it curiously; then, pushing back the golden hair, and twining one of the curls a moment about her finger, she laid it by her own long, black shining tresses, saying sadly, "I wish my curls were light and fair like yours. It would suit Herbert better. He fancies a blonde more than a brunette, at least he told me as much that time he wrote to me of you."

"Of me?" Anna asked anxiously, the color receding from her cheek and lip. "Why did he write of me, and when?"

The dark eyes were shut now and Anna could see the closed lids quiver, just as did the sweet voice which replied, "It's strange to talk so openly to you as if we were dear friends, as we will be when I come to Castlewild to live. It is my nature to say right out what I think, and people sometimes calls me silly. Herbert does, but I don't care. When I like a person I show it, and I like you. Besides, there's something tells me there is a bond of sympathy between us greater than between ordinary strangers. I guess it is because we are both engaged, both so young, and both rather pretty, too. You certainly are, and I know I am not bad looking, if Aunt Theo did use to try and make me think I was. Her story and the mirror's did not agree."

Anna looked up amazed at this frank avowal, which few would ever have made, even though in their hearts they were far vainer of their beauty than was Mildred Atherton of hers. Was she really silly, or was she wholly artless and childlike in her manner of expression? Anna could not decide, and with a growing [illegible] in the stranger, she listened while Mildred [illegible]: "In one of his letters last May Herbert [illegible] much of Anna Burroughs, with her eyes of blue

and golden hair, calling her a 'Lily of the Valley,' and asking, all in play, you know, if I should feel very badly if he should elope some day with his Lily. It shocks you, don't it!" she said, as Anna started with a sudden exclamation. "But he did not mean it. He only tried to tease me, and for a time it did nake in my heart a little round spot of pain which burned like fire, for though Herbert has some bad habits and naughty ways, I love him very dearly. He is always better with me. He says I do him good, though he calls me a puritan, and that time when the burning spot was in my heart, I used to go away and pray, that if Herbert did not like me as he ought, God would incline him to do so. Once I prayed for you, whom I had never seen," and the little soft hand stole up to Anna's bowed head smoothing the golden locks caressingly, "You'll think me foolish, but thoughts of you really troubled me then, when I was weak and nervous, for I was just recovering from sickness, and so I prayed that the Lily of the Valley might not care for Herbert, might not come between us, and I know God heard me just as well as if it had been my own father of whom I asked a favor. Perhaps it is not having any father or mother which makes me take every little trouble to God. Do you do so, Anna? Do you tell all your cares to him?"

Alas for conscience-stricken Anna, who had not prayed for so very, very long! What could she say? Nothing, except to dash the bitter tears from her eyes and answer, sobbingly,

"I used to do so once, but now—oh, Miss Atherton! now I am so hard, so wicked, I dare not pray!"

In great perplexity Mildred looked at her a moment, and then said, sorrowfully.

"Just because I was hard and wicked, I should want to pray—to ask that if I had done anything bad I might be forgiven, or if I had intended to do wrong, I might be kept from doing it."

Mildred little guessed how keen a pang her words "or *intended* to do wrong," inflicted upon the repenting Anna, who involuntarily stretched her hands toward the young girl as toward something which, if she did but grasp it, would save her from herself. Mildred took the hands between her own, and pressing them gently, said:

"I don't know why you feel so badly, neither can I understand how anything save sin can make you unhappy when that good man is almost your husband. You must love him very much, do you not?"

"Yes," came faintly from Anna's lips, and laying her face on the pillow beside Mildred's, she murmured, inaudibly: "God help me, and forgive that falsehood, I will love him, if I do not now."

Anna did not know she prayed, but He who understands our faintest desire knew it, and from that moment dated her return to duty. She should not wrong that gentle, trusting girl. She could not break Milly's heart with Adam's as break it she surely should if her wicked course were persisted in. And then there flashed upon her the conviction that Herbert had deceived her in more ways than one. He had represented Mildred as tiring of the engagement as well as himself—had said that though her pride might be a little wounded, she would on the whole be glad to be rid of him so easily, and all the while he knew that what he said was false. Would he deal less deceitfully by her when the novelty of calling her his wife had worn away? Would he not weary of her and sigh for the victim sacrificed so cruelly? Anna's head and heart both seemed bursting with pain, and when Mildred, alarmed at the pallor ot her face, asked if she were ill, there was no falsehood in the reply, "Yes, I'm dizzy and faint—I cannot stay here longer," and scarcely conscious of what she was doing, Anna quitted the room, leaning for support against the banisters in the hall and almost falling against old Martha who was carrying hot tea to Mildred Atherton.

"Let me go home, I am sick," Anna whispered to Adam, who, summoned by Martha, bent anxiously over her, asking what was the matter.

It was too late to go home, he said. She must stay there till morning; and very tenderly he helped her up to the chamber she was to occupy, the one next to his own, and from which, at a late hour, she heard him, as, thinking her asleep, he thanked his Heavenly Father for giving her to him, and asked that he might be more worthy of her than he was.

"No, Adam, oh no—pray that I may be more worthy of you," trembled on Anna's lips, and then lest

her resolution might fail, she arose and striking a light, tore a blank leaf from a book lying on a table, and wrote to Herbert Dunallen that she could never meet him again, except as a friend and the future husband of Mildred Atherton.

Folding it once over, she wrote his name upon it, then, faint with excitement, and shivering with cold, threw herself upon the outside of the bed, and sobbed herself into a heavy sleep, more exhausting in its effects than wakefulness would have been.

There was another patient for the village doctor, besides Mildred, at the cottage next morning. Indeed, *her* case sank into insignificance when compared with that of the moaning, tossing, delirious Anna, who shrank away from Adam, begging him not to touch her, for she was not worthy.

They had found her just after sunrise, and sent for her mother, whose first thought was to take her home; but Anna resisted at once; she must stay there she said, and expiate her sin, in Adam's house. Then, looking into her mother's face, she added with a smile,

"You know it was to have been mine in a week!"

Adam did not see the smile. He only heard the words, and his heart beat quickly as he thought it natural that Anna should wish to stay in what was to be her home.

The hot August sun came pouring into the small, low room she occupied, making it so uncomfortable, that Adam said she must be moved, and taking her in his arms he carried her down the stairs, and laid her upon the bridal bed, whose snowy drapery was scarcely whiter than was her face, save where the fever burned upon her fair skin. On the carpet where it had fallen he found the crumpled note. He knew it was her writing, and he looked curiously at the name upon it, while there stole over him a shadowy suspicion, as to the cause of Anna's recent coldness.

"Herbert Dunallen!" He read the name with a shudder, and then thrust the note into his pocket until the young man came.

Oh, how he longed to read the note and know what his affianced bride had written to Dunallen; but not

for the world would he have opened it, and Anna's secret was safe, unless she betrayed it in her delirium, as she seemed likely to do.

A messenger had been dispatched to Castlewild, informing its young heir of Mildred Atherton's mishap. In the room he called his library, Herbert sat, arranging his papers, and writing some directions for his head man of business.

"Something from Adam Floyd," he exclaimed, as he tore open the envelope, "Oh, bother," was all the comment he made, as he read the hastily written lines, which gave no hint of Anna's sudden illness.

He was not in the least prepared for that, and the sudden paling of his cheek when, on his arrival at the cottage, he heard of it, did not escape the watchful Adam, who quietly handed him the note, explaining where he had found it, and then went back to Anna, in whose great blue eyes there was a look of fear whenever they met his—a look which added to the dull, heavy pain gnawing at his heart. He did not see Herbert when he read Anna's note—did not hear his muttered curse at woman's fickleness, but he saw the tiny fragments into which it was torn, flutter past the window where he sat by Anna's side. One, a longer strip than the others, fell upon the window still, and Adam picked it up, reading involuntarily the words "Your unhappy Anna."

Down in the depths of Adam's heart there was a sob, a moan of anguish as his fears were thus corroborated, but his face gave no token of the fierce pain within. It was just as calm as ever, when it turned again to Anna who was talking in her sleep, first of Herbert and then of Adam, begging him to forget that he ever knew the little girl called Anna Burroughs, or carried her over the rifts of snow to the schoolhouse under the hill. It seemed strange that she should grow sick so fast when yesterday she had been comparatively well, but the sudden cold she had taken the previous night, added to the strong excitement under which she had been laboring, combined to spend the energies of a constitution never strong, and the fever increased so rapidly that before the close of the second day more than one heart throbbed with fear as to what the end would be.

In spite of her lame ankle Mildred had managed to get into the sick-room, urging Herbert to accompany her, and feeling greatly shocked at his reply that "camphor and medicine were not to his taste."

Herbert had not greeted his bride elect very lovingly, for to her untimely appearance he attributed Anna's illness and decision. He could change the latter he knew, only give him the chance, but the former troubled him greatly. Anna might die, and then—Herbert Dunallen did not know what then, but bad as he was he would rather she should not die with all that sin against Adam unconfessed, and out in the Beech woods where the night before he had planned with her their flight and where after leaving Mildred he repaired, he laid his boyish head upon the summer grass and *cried*, partly as a child would cry for the bauble denied, partly as an honest man might mourn for the loved one whose life he had helped to shorten.

Regularly each morning the black pony from Castlewild was tied at the cottage gate, while its owner made inquiry for Anna. He had discernment enough to see that from the first his visits were unwelcome to Adam Floyd, who he believed knew the contents of the note written him by Anna. But in this last he was mistaken. All Adam knew certainly was gathered from Anna's delirious ravings, which came at last to be understood by Mildred, who in spite of Mrs. Judge Harcourt's entreaties or those of her tall, handsome son, George Harcourt, just home from Harvard, persisted in staying at the cottage and ministering to Anna. For a time the soft black eyes of sweet Mildred Atherton were heavy with unshed tears, while the sorrow of a wounded, deceived heart was visible upon her face; but at length her true womanly sense of right rose above it all, and waking as if from a dream she saw how utterly unworthy even of her childish love was the *boy man*, whose society she shunned, until, irritated by her manner, he one day demanded an explanation of her coolness.

"You know, Herbert," and Milly's clear, innocent eyes looked steadily into his. "You know far better than I, all that has passed between you and Anna Burroughs. To me and her lover, noble Adam Floyd, it is known only in part, but you understand the whole,

and I am glad of this opportunity to tell you that you are free from an engagement which never should have been made, and of which you are weary. I did love you so much, Herbert, even though I knew that you were wayward. I loved you, and prayed for you, too, every morning and every night. I shall do that yet, wherever you are, but henceforth we are friends, and nothing more. Seek forgiveness, first of God, and then of Adam Floyd, whom you thought to wrong by wresting from him the little ewe-lamb, which was his all."

Herbert looked up quickly. Wholly unversed in Scripture, the *ewe-lamb* was Greek to him, but Mildred was too much in earnest for him to jest. She had never seemed so desirable as now, that he had lost her, and grasping her hand from which she was taking the engagement ring, he begged of her to wait, to consider, before she cast him off.

"I was mean with Anna, I know, and I meant to run away with her, but that is over now. Speak to me, Milly; I do not know you in this new character."

Milly hardly knew herself, but with regard to Herbert she was firm, giving him no hope of ever recovering the love he had wantonly thrown away.

After that interview, the black pony stayed quietly in its stable at Castlewild, while Herbert shut himself up in his room, sometimes crying when he thought of Anna, sometimes swearing when he thought of Mildred, and ending every reverie with his pet words, "oh botheration."

Each morning, however, a servant was sent to the cottage where, for weeks, Anna hovered between life and death, carefully tended by her mother and Mildred Atherton, and, tenderly watched by Adam, who deported himself toward her as a fond parent would toward its erring but suffering child. There was no bitterness in Adam's heart, nothing save love and pity for the white-faced girl whom he held firmly in his arms, soothing her gently, while Mildred cut away the long, golden tresses, at which, in her wild moods, she clutched so angrily.

"Poor shorn lamb," he whispered, while his tears, large and warm, dropped upon the wasted face he had

not kissed since the night he and Mildred watched with her and heard so much of the sad story.

But for the help which cometh only from on high, Adam's heart would have broken, those long bright September days, when everything seemed to mock his woe. It was so different from what he had hoped when he built castles of the Autumn time, when Anna would be with him. She was there, it is true; there in the room he had called *ours*, but was as surely lost to him, he said, as if the bright-hued flowers were blossoming above her grave. She did not love him, else she had never purposed to deceive him, and he looked drearily forward to the time when he must again take up his solitary life, uncheered by one hope in the future.

She awoke to consciousness at last. It was in the grey dawn of the morning, when Adam was sitting by her, while her mother and Mildred rested in the adjoining room. Eagerly she seemed to be searching for something, and when Adam asked for what, she answered: "The note; I had it in my hand when I went to sleep."

Bending over her, Adam said: "I found it; I gave it to him."

There was a perceptible start, a flushing of Anna's cheek and a frightened, half pleading look in her eyes; but she asked no questions, and thinking she would rather not have him there, Adam went quietly out to her mother with the good news of Anna's consciousness.

Days went by after that, days of slow convalescence; but now that he was no longer needed in the sick room, Adam stayed away. Tokens of his thoughtful care, however, were visible everywhere, in the tasteful bouquets arranged each morning, just as he knew Anna liked them—in the luscious fruit and tempting delicacies procured by him for the weak invalid who at last asked Mildred to call him and leave them alone together.

At first there was much constraint on either side, but at last Anna burst out impetuously, "Oh, Adam, I do not know what I said in my delirium, or how much you know, and so I must tell you everything."

Then, as rapidly as possible and without excusing

herself in the least, she told her story and what she had intended to do.

For a moment Adam did not speak, and when he did it was to ask if Mildred had told her about Herbert. But his name had not been mentioned between the two girls and thus it devolved upon Adam to explain. Herbert had left the neighborhood and gone abroad immediately after Anna's convalescence was a settled thing.

"Perhaps he will soon come back," Adam said, and Anna cried, "Oh, Adam, I never wish him to return, I know now that I never loved him as—I—oh, I wish I had died."

"You were not prepared, and God spared you to us. We are very glad to have you back," Adam said.

These were the first words he had spoken which had in them anything like his former manner, and Anna involuntarily stretched her hand towards him. He took it, and letting it rest on his broad, warm palm, smoothed it a little as he would have smoothed a little child's, but what Anna longed to hear was not spoken, and in a tremor of pain she sobbed out,

"In mercy, speak to me once as you used to. Say that you forgive me, even though we never can be to each other again what we have been!"

"I do forgive you, Anna; and, as for the rest I did not suppose you wished it."

Raising herself up, Anna threw her arms impetuously around his neck, exclaiming.

"I do wish it, Adam. Don't cast me off. Try me, and see if I am not worthy. I have sinned, but I have repented too. Never were you so dear to me! Oh, Adam, take me back!"

She was getting too much excited, and putting her arms from his neck, Adam laid her upon the pillow, and said to her gently,

"Anna, my faith in you has been shaken, but my love has never changed. You must not talk longer now. I'll come again by and by, and meantime I'll send Miss Atherton. She knows it all, both from Herbert and yourself. She is a noble girl. You can trust her."

At Adam's request Mildred went to Anna, and sitting down beside her, listened while Anna confessed the

past, even to the particulars of her interview with Adam, and then added tearfully,

"Forgive me and tell me what to do."

"I should be an unworthy disciple of Him who said forgive, until seventy times seven, if I refused your request," was Mildred's reply, as she wound her arm around Anna's neck, and imprinted upon Anna's lips the kiss of pardon.

Then as Anna could bear it, she unfolded her plan, which was that the invalid should return with her to her pleasant home at Rose Hill, staying there until she had fully tested the strength of her love for Adam, who, if she stood the test should come for her himself. As a change of air and scene seemed desirable, Anna's mother raised no serious objection to this arrangement, and so one October morning Adam Floyd held for a moment a little wasted hand in his while he said good-bye to its owner, who so long as he was in sight leaned from the carriage window to look at him standing there so lone and solitary, yet knowing it was better to part with her awhile if he would have their future as bright as he had once fancied it would be.

Eight years have passed away and on the broad piazza of Castlewild a sweet-faced woman stands, waiting impatiently the arrival of the carriage winding slowly up the hill, and which stops at last, while Mildred Atherton alights from it and ascends the steps to where Anna stands waiting for her. And Mildred who for years has been abroad, and has but recently returned to America, has come to be for a few weeks her guest, and to see how Anna deports herself as the wife of Adam Floyd, and mistress of beautiful Castlewild.

There is a sad story connected with Anna's being there at Castlewild, a story which only Mildred can tell, and in the dusky twilight of that first evening when Adam was away and the baby Milly asleep in its crib, she takes Anna's hand in hers and tells her what Anna indeed knew before, but which seems far more real as it comes from Mildred's lips, making the tears fall fast as she listens to it. Tells her how Providence directed her to the room in a Paris hotel, where a fellow-countryman lay dying, alone and unattended save by

a hired nurse. The sick room was on the same hall with her own, and in passing the door, which was ajar, she was startled to hear a voice once familiar to her and which seemed to call her name. Five minutes later and she was sitting by Herbert Dunallen's bedside and holding his burning hand in hers, while he told her how long he had lain there with the fever contracted in the south of France, and how at the moment she passed his door he was crying out in his anguish and desolation for the friends so far away, and had spoken her name, not knowing she was so near.

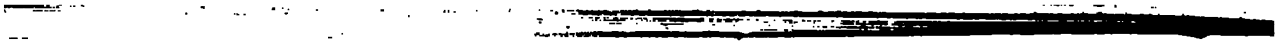
After that Milly was his constant attendant, and once when she sat by him he talked to her of the past and of Anna, who had been three years the wife of Adam Floyd.

"I am glad of it," he said. "She is happier with him than she could have been with me. I am sorry that I ever came between them, it was more my fault than hers, and I have told Adam so. I wrote him from Algiers and asked his forgiveness, and he answered my letter like the noble man he is. There is peace between us now, and I am glad. I have heard from him, or rather of him since in a roundabout way. He lost his right arm in the war, and that will incapacitate him from his work. He can never use the hammer again. I do not suppose he has so very much money. Anna liked Castlewild. In fact I believe she cared more for that than for me, and I have given it to her;—have made my will to that effect. It is with my other papers, and Milly, when I am dead, you will see that Anna has her own. I did not think it would come quite so soon, for I am young to die. Not thirty yet, but it is better so, perhaps. You told me that you prayed for me every day, and the memory of that has stuck to me like a burr, till I have prayed for myself, more than once, when I was well, and often since shut up in this room which I shall never leave alive. Stay by me, Milly, to the last; it will not be long, and pray that if I am not right, God will make me so. Show me the way, Milly, I want to be good, I am sorry, oh, so sorry for it all."

For a few days longer he lingered, and then one lovely autumnal morning, when Paris was looking her

brightest, he died, with Milly's hand in his, and Milly's tears upon his brow.

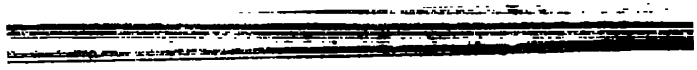
And so Castlewild came to Anna, who had been three years its mistress when Milly came to visit her, and on whose married life no shadow however small had fallen, except, indeed, the shadows which are common to the lives of all. When her husband came home from the war a cripple, as he told her with quivering lips, her tears fell like rain for him, because he was sorry, but for herself she did not care; he was left to her, and kissing him lovingly she promised to be his right arm and to work for him if necessary, even to building houses, if he would teach her how. But poverty never came to Adam Floyd and Anna, and probably never would have come, even if there had been no will which left them Castlewild. That was a great surprise, and at first Adam hesitated about going there. But Anna persuaded him at last, and there we leave them, perfectly happy in each other's love, and both the better, perhaps, for the grief and pain which came to them in their youth.



My Borrowing Neighbor.

BY

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.



Faithfully Yours
Margaret E Sangster.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

THE literary career of Mrs. Sangster, born Margaret E. Munson, began in her seventeenth year, when she wrote and published a book—a child's story—called "Little Jamie." Before that, however, she had written verses, competed for prizes (and won them) with essays and other writings. For seventeen years she has entirely supported her family by journalistic work.

She is a graceful as well as a strong writer; her verses are full of tender, often religious, sentiments and her stories are bright and well told. But most of her writing at this day is for the newspapers, and goes out to the world without her name. However pleasant may be the fields of general literature, when it comes to the question of a steady income, the writer, if he is wise, takes to journalism.

Mrs. Sangster married early and accepted the care of a family of children, and has been a successful stepmother. She has one child of her own, a son, and within the last year or two has arrived at the dignity of grandmotherhood. Her home is in Brooklyn, where she has many friends, and is noted for her active labors in connection with church and Sunday-school work.

In the beginning of her settled work she was connected with that attractive but rather short lived paper, *Hearth and Home*. Since that time she has worked on the *Christian at Work*, *The Christian Intelligencer*, and latterly *Harper's Young People*, in which she has won lasting fame among the young readers as "The Little Postmistress." She is a steady worker in several fields—book reviewing, story writing, and verse making.

Mrs. Sangster, though a steady and systematic worker, is an enthusiastic one; in speaking of her profession as a journalist she once said:—"I love it with all my heart, and would not exchange it with all its

drudgery for any other position of which I can dream. Everything about it suits me and charms me. More, perhaps, than anything else, I value the opportunity it gives me to say helpful words, and reach a cordial hand to the struggling of my sex.

For a quarter of a century Mrs. Sangster has been before the public as a writer, beginning as a writer of verse, and combining later the practical work of a critic and journalist. So much of her writing has been impersonal that she has not the credit her due for clever work, honestly done.

MY BORROWING NEIGHBOR.

I REMEMBER everything we had for breakfast that morning. Why I remember so very ordinary a thing as breakfast, and why that special morning lives in my memory, distinct and unfaded, I cannot explain.

Among the many mysteries of psychology, none are more mysterious to my thinking, than the things we remember, and the things we don't. We set ourselves, with prayer and pains, to the fixing of a certain event or string of events in our recollection, and the next week we try in vain to find the thing again. We've locked it up in our mental lumber-room and lost the key. We take no conscious notice of another event, or string of events; we are not aware that they are making any marked or deep impression upon us, and years after a random word or an idle jest awakes them, and up they start as fresh and bright as if they had happened yesterday.

We had for breakfast that morning fried chicken, light rolls, and coffee. There was fruit on the table, of course. We always had fruit whatever the season, and this being summer time, we had figs—fresh figs, pale green and rich purple, gathered with the morning dew upon them, great delicious spheres and ovals of honeyed sweetness. Breakfast was well begun, and Cousin John had just asked for his second cup, when the door of the dining-room,—the door, I mean, that opened upon the back porch, was shaded by an apparition.

A little negro girl, barefooted, of course, had come up the porch steps so softly that nobody had heard her. The first I knew of her presence was my seeing her standing there, and hearing her say, as she held out a cup and saucer upon a tray:

"Please, Miss Elizabeth, *send* Miss Malvina a cup o' your coffee. She say she done got an' choc'lat dis yere mornin', but she like a cup o' coffee."

"That must be our new neighbor, Libbie," said Cousin John, as our dignified waiter, Henry, with the utmost pomp and ceremony took the cup from the small servitor and carried it to me.

"Does your mistress like cream and sugar?" I inquired.

"Reckon her got sugar—want cream, though."

So I poured out a cup of my coffee, and sent it, rich with cream, to my unknown friend. Her house and mine were pretty near together,—not like houses in New York, of course, for in the town where we lived, people had not learned, as yet, to build their houses like barracks in long uniform rows; every man's front door precisely like every other man's on the street, and the windows all as similar as peas in a pod. All our houses there had gardens around them, and places for the children to play, and trees and flowers, and we all kept dogs and chickens and pigs.

Down at the foot of our lane, there was a picturesque cottage that had been long untenanted. It had a garden sloping to the water's edge, and its eaves were overrun with roses and honeysuckles. A day or two before the opening of my story, a load of furniture had gone down the lane, followed soon after by another, and another. Then a fat and pompous colored woman had made her appearance at the back door, which was in full view from ours, a woman who from her gay turban to her slippered feet had cook inscribed upon her; a gray-haired serving man had been seen to shuffle in a promiscuous manner about the premises, and finally a carriage load of ladies, a poodle dog, and a canary bird had arrived, and completed, we supposed, the family. The first night we had heard no sounds, as was natural, for having come from somewhere (the carriage had been driven up soon after the arrival of the daily boat) the travellers had been tired, and had gone to bed early, no doubt. But next morning it was very pleasant to hear the gay snatches of talk, the rippling sounds of laughter, and the occasional burst of music from a rather old, but sweet-toned, piano, that came floating to us merrily, as we sat on our porch, John with his newspaper, and I with my knitting.

"I'm glad those girls are there," said John.

"Of course you are," said I; "though what differ-

ence can it possibly make to you? you never go very much with girls."

The fact was that my Cousin John, though a lawyer, and a good looking man of forty, was as diffident and shy as a school-girl on commencement day; and his usual custom was to beat a retreat to his room, if he could accomplish it safely, whenever he heard the approaching rustle of a silk dress, or caught sight of feathers and flowers, like Birnam wood coming to Dunsinane, advancing down our garden walk.

"Oh, well!" said John, "I like to see them about and hear them, when they don't want me to entertain them, you know; and that younger one *is* certainly pretty."

Pretty she was, with golden hair, and a white dress: so much we could see, as she flitted in and out between her mother and sisters. Indeed, they were all pretty. The mother, plump, matronly, easy-going; the two elder girls, brown-haired and stately, and this fairy of a "Lill," whom everybody was calling on, from morning to night.

That was one day. It was the second day that they made my acquaintance and I theirs. It began with the coffee.

I had established myself in the quiet, pleasant hours that come midway between breakfast and noon, with my writing-desk on my lap and my inkstand on a chair beside me. That's a woman's way of being cosy and confidential with her paper when she writes a letter. A man sits straight up with his bath-note or his commercial on the desk or the table, writes his one page or his four, and has done with it. A woman takes her dainty French sheet, with the faint suggestion of perfume, mignonette, or heliotrope clinging to it, and selects her pen daintily; and, if her letter be to a friend she cares for, some absent precious darling, her heart lingers over and caresses the words as she writes them, and the missive, inconsequent and diffuse and feminine as possible, goes out full-weighted with tenderness. Now I do hate to be interrupted when I'm writing such letters as I was that day. My slender stock of patience deserts me utterly if people will persist in coming with all sorts of questions just when I'm overflowing with bright thoughts and loving

epithets. "But what has this to do with my narrative?" you ask.

Well, this: I was just in the midst of a sparkling sentence when a voice broke on my ear:

"Please, Miss Elizabeth, *send* Miss Lill two lumps o' sugar to feed her bird? Her sugar all done used up."

How on earth did that mite learn that my name was Elizabeth?

Two lumps of sugar! *noblesse oblige.* My mother's daughter was not brought up to count sugar by lumps. I sent—misguided creature that I was—I sent a cupful.

Well, I began again on my letter and I finished it and began another. I was half through that one when again there came the soft voice, and looking up, there met my own the great, velvety, appealing eyes again, black as Erebus, through the surrounding blackness of that child's dusky face.

"Please, Miss Eliz'beth, send Miss Constantia a sheet of note paper and a envelop'? Her done dropped de key ob her trunk down de well, and her want to write a letter to a frien'."

"I'm afraid you are coming upon errands of your own," I answered with severity of aspect. "Miss Constantia never sent you."

"Yes, indeed, she did," persisted Black-eyed Susan, as in my mind I had named this young person.

"Well, here it is then; but when I see Miss Constantia I'll ask her about it."

A week later we called. Cousin John was so pleased with the glimmer of Miss Lillie's curls in the distance that he actually so far overcame his native shyness as to consent to be my escort. What he wore I don't know—a coat and vest probably, pantaloons and shoes of some sort, of course, and a necktie and gloves—also a shirt. A gentleman's costume admits of so little variety. I was in all the glory of a new suit—lavender silk and Brussels point lace, and my lovely black lace shawl, a shawl that haunts my regretful dreams, though long ago it left me for parts unknown, borne away by a burglar on the war-path. You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will, but the thought of past laces will hang round it still.

Mrs. Vernon and her daughters received us with cordial *empressement.* They were elegant women, all of them, with society manners and a sort of graceful, high-bred air that charmed me and utterly captivated and enthralled Cousin John. I forgot to say I wore pearls. We always dressed in our very bestest best when we made calls in —— town, having no other way in which to display our goods. It was the thing to be *en grande toilette* when you made a call. Ours was delightful. The gray-haired waiter brought us lemonade, and Mrs. Vernon complimented us on having fruit in abundance in our garden.

"Literally under your own vine and fig-tree," she said. Whereupon I at once gave her the freedom of berries, cherries, peas, beans, plums, pears and all, telling her whenever she desired, to help herself freely. She accepted my courtesy in the same spirit in which it was offered, and we parted the best of friends.

Constantia, Katherine, and Lillie returned the call next day, and staid two hours. Katherine tried my piano, and Lillie made love to my birds. As for Constantia, she was suave and winning, and, if I do say it, made love to Cousin John. I was delighted to find that he was blind as a bat to her, however, and had eyes only for little Lillie.

A few days after, I decided to make plum preserves. "Henry," I said, "when you have returned from market, please gather the plums." A sort of flash, it was not more, lit the decorous gravity of Henry's usually immovable features.

"The plums are done picked," he said.

"Oh! very well," said I. "Then I'll go right at my preserving."

"But, Miss Elizabeth, Paul gathered the plums yesterday for Miss Malvina Vernon, and Aunt Hester am busy preserving them for her."

"*All* the plums?" I said, amazed.

"Ebery plum," said Henry solemnly.

The Bible tells about "spoiling the Egyptians and spoiling the Philistines." I had never felt any special sympathy with them before, but for five minutes after I found my plums were gone I knew how they felt, poor things—I wonder if the spoilers took "*every* plum."

"Henry," said I, "buy me two baskets of plums, and send them home from market directly,"—which Henry did. I put on a calico dress and a housekeeping apron, crossed my little flagged yard and entered the kitchen. Aunt Diana was paring potatoes, three or four of her tribe were sitting and standing about, and at my entrance they scuttled out of the way, all but the baby, a funny little black ball, that I petted a great deal. She crawled up to me, and began to play with the rosettes on my slippers with her little fat hands.

"Aunt Diana," I said, "I'm going to preserve plums."

"Laws, honey!" said Aunt Diana, "how can ye do it to-day, 'less you borrow a preservin' kittle from some o' the neighbors?"

"I borrow a preserving kettle! Why, Auntie, your wits are wool-gathering; I've a splendid new one of my own. Why should I borrow?"

"Ef you will len' your things, chile, right an' lef' you may come to borrowin' yet. Miss Malvina, she done took off de preservin' kettle yesterday.'

"Why, I never said she could have it!"

"She send up while you and Mas'r John out riding; say she mus' hab it right off. I say I cannot len' it without your consent, on no 'suasion whatsoeber."

"That settled it, of course?"

"Miss Katherine, she come herse'f and say you hab tole her she could hab it; so circumstances alterin' cases, I sent Henry down with it."

"Diana, send Henry at once, and say that I am waiting to use it, and beg they will return it directly."

I sat down and fanned myself. I fanned and fanned and fanned and concealed my feelings, which were not serene nor satisfied.

After an interval Henry came bringing with him—a kettle. Shades of my ancestors! was that my preserving kettle? Dear to the housekeeping soul is its humblest pot and pan; especially sacred is its porcelain-lined, immaculate, and thrice-prized and guarded kettle, in which summer fruits are crystallized into molds of beauty and things of joy for the winter and the early spring, the days when there shall be nothing to make pies of. I was careless about many things: I lost my best gloves and forgot my umbrella in a

store down town; I put away things so carefully that I could not find them, but I did look well on the ways of my kitchen furniture.

This kettle was ruined. It was burned brown three quarters up the sides. I stood in silent despair. At last I spoke.

"If you, Diana, can do the plums in that thing you may. I shall never use it again."

I shut myself up in that refuge of the weary, my own chamber. I thought of the misery it was to have a borrowing neighbor. Our coffee, I may mention was by this time made daily with an eye to Mrs. Vernon's needs, and her cup and saucer was now changed for a small pitcher, which, morning by morning was replenished from my urn. I felt tempted, as that practical man, Cousin John, suggested occasionally, to make it half water, but when it came to the point it was not possible for me to commit such a meanness. *Noblesse oblige* again.

A bath, a clean wrapper, cologne, and a new novel, with the leaves uncut—I have another womanly weakness, and like to cut my own leaves—restored my amiability. It was helped too by whiffs of sweetness that came from the kitchen where Aunt Di, important and quite equal to the occasion, was doing up my plums. A cheery voice and a brisk step in the hall below, and presently my name called, made me aware that my neighbor was below. Had she come to apologize? I was prepared to receive her apologies graciously, and descended.

How little I knew my friend! Lightly upon her conscience, if she were aware of it at all, sat my preserving kettle. Ten of them would not have pressed a feather's weight on that mercurial mind.

"My love," she said, "how well you look to-day. You positively don't look a day over sixteen. And how magnificent you were the other day in that lace shawl. Katherine would be queenly in it, but since the —— Bank broke, my poor girls can't dress as I'd like to have them. By the bye, they are asked to Miss Cornelia Pegram's wedding to-day. Our family is equal to the Pegrams if we are poor, and I'd like her to look as well as anybody. She said I must not, in fact she nearly cried about it, but I told her you would

be candid and say "no" if you did not want to say "yes," and it would be no harm to ask you. Now do say "*no*" if you'd rather. But if you'd let Kitty wear your lace shawl, it would drape over her pearl colored silk in a manner perfectly statuesque."

I am not, I grieve to say, a strong-minded woman. I dislike to appear disobliging; I'd rather suffer martyrdom than say "no" when I'm expected to say "yes," when only my own convenience is concerned. So, inly provoked and outwardly calm, as is the Machiavellian manner of my sex, I said "yes," and brought the shawl.

"How sweet you are!" said Mrs. Vernon, giving me a patronizing kiss, which I wiped off the moment her back was turned.

Miss Katherine wore my shawl to the reception, and she wore it to church, and she wore it everywhere—I am not romancing, reader mine—for three immortal weeks. Then I sent for it, and it came home. It was not particularly the worse for wear, though I did find a microscopic tear that had been carefully darned, and though it had acquired a smell of patchouli and musk that no amount of airing ever quite took from it till the day it parted from me forever. When I found it missing the thought of the musk went a little way toward consoling me.

My borrowing neighbors borrowed everything, and never returned an item, from the least to the greatest, unless they were asked to. They borrowed my prayer-book and my hymn-book, my last new novel and my freshest magazine, my aprons for patterns and my bonnets for models: They borrowed my cups and saucers, my silver spoons—these they did return, however—and my dinner plates and knives and forks. They borrowed not the raw material only—as sugar and tea and butter and soap,—they systematically made demands upon my dinner and supper and breakfast table, upon my cake-box and my supply of bread, until I ceased to be wonder-stricken, and yielded an apathetic assent to all they desired. Last of all they borrowed my Cousin John.

John was in love with Lillie. It was too absurd, I told myself over and over, that John Winthrop, who had any number of sensible girls to select from, and

giris near his own age, too,—though what man of forty ever seeks a wife of his own age?—should wear his heart upon his sleeve for a little trifler like Lillie Vernon. Her golden hair, her flitting blush, her violet eyes, and her fairy-like ways had woven a net about the grave, scholarly man, from which he could not free himself. He, the most methodical of gentleman, was often late for meals; he took to writing sentimental poetry, with rhymes like "bloom" and "tomb," "sigh" and "die," "darling" and "starling;" he bought beautiful things, and lavished them on Lillie, who received them with extravagant admiration, and wore them openly. Cousin John was continually at their service. Mrs. Vernon and all the girls seemed to regard him as a brother.

"A household of ladies is so unprotected, so very dependent," Constantia would say, "and Mr. Winthrop is so obliging."

As for me, I never knew before how many useful things John had done before Lillie's star had risen in our path. There are things in this life that we never prize till we miss them. I did not precisely want her for a cousin-in-law, but still I liked her much the best of the family; and I thought that if she were once John's wife, she would take on some, at least, of the dignity that was so becoming to John.

There came a day when John consulted me. He thought Lillie loved him, fair, timid dove, but he feared to frighten her by a proposal, and he didn't think it quite honorable to let things go on as they were. He had spoken to Mrs. Vernon, but she said, while she was herself quite willing and would feel honored by the alliance she could not speak for Lillie. She must decide for herself.

"But then, dear John," said I, "why are you distressed? I'm sure Lillie seems to like you ever so much, and you know the old rhyme:

> 'He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch
> To win or lose it all.'"

"I'll act upon your advice, Cousin Libbie," said John.

John did—at least he meant to. He went down the lane one evening—a lovely evening in early autumn. The shaded lamp in the little parlor cast a mellow light over the room, over Katherine with her regal head bent over a book of poems, over Constantia with her crochet work in her white, shapely hands, over "airy, fairy Lillian," who had on her white dress as usual, and a set of turquoise, John's gift, as her only adornment. By her side sate a young gentleman, a tall fellow with a mustache and curly brown hair.

"Oh, Mr. Winthrop!" said Lillie, "how pleased I am to see you! This is my friend, Mr. Mortimer Selkirk, and I want him to know you and you to know him. I may as well tell *you*, you've been such a friend to mamma and all of us, that Mortimer and I have been engaged for the last three years, and we're going to be married next week."

We sold our house and moved away. Cousin John never got over it, really, however, till some years after he met Mrs. Selkirk at Niagara. She had grown dumpy and sallow, and had three children and a maid, and he overheard her asking her neighbor in the parlor if she wouldn't be so very kind as to lend her her polonaise long enough for Mary Jane to cut the pattern.

The Girls' Sketching Camp.

BY

OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

Olive Thorne Miller

OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

THE writer known by the name of Olive Thorne Miller was born in Central New York State more than fifty years ago, and was baptized Harriet Mann. Her father was a banker, who looking at life through the rosiest of spectacles, always saw the fair land of promise a little beyond him, and perpetually followed the too enticing vision. So her youth was passed "all along the road" from New York to Missouri, stopping from three to five years in each place. Western New York, Ohio, Wisconsin and Illinois were respectively her home, till by marriage she settled herself in Chicago for her first long residence in any place. About twelve years ago she removed to Brooklyn, N. Y., where she still lives.

Almost from the cradle, Mrs. Miller was a bookworm. Exceedingly diffident, avoiding as far as she could all association with others, finding no sympathy with her peculiar tastes at home (her three brothers being all younger than herself), she shrank more and more into herself, and lived more and more in her books. A shy, awkward, overgrown girl, with a painfully ready blush, is the picture of her not too happy youth.

To write was always her ambition, though school compositions she hated and shirked when possible; but she was slow of development and never sent anything to the press till nearly twenty years old, when she began writing short anonymous letters to the daily papers, on subjects of passing interest. At the age of twenty-three she married, added the name of Miller to her own, and with the notions then in vogue, thrust entirely aside her literary dreams, and gave herself utterly to the work she had assumed, of housekeeper and mother. Four children came to her home, and

not till the youngest was beyond babyhood did she touch literary work again.

Toward the latter part of this domestic period, she began to write an occasional letter to a paper, when feelings grew too strong for silence. It was then she assumed the name Olive Thorne, and later when the pseudonym was somewhat widely known, and the possession of two names became inconvenient, she added her own married name Miller.

She began for children, and for several years she never attempted writing for others than her little friends. Gradually she drifted into sketches of natural history, having a fresh, vivid way of depicting the personality of bird or beast, that made it an acquaintance at once, and proved irresistible to every youngster. These early sketches published everywhere, were collected in 1873 and made into a book which has to this day a steady, regular sale, and is the dearest treasure of hundreds of little people all over our land, "Little Folk in Feathers and Fur." Later she made a second collection of her animal sketches which she called "Queer Pets at Marcy's." Meanwhile she wrote her first long story "Nimpo's Troubles," which ran as a serial in *Saint Nicholas* during its first years. A year or two after she wrote her fourth and last book for children, "Little People of Asia."

A few years ago a friend introduced Mrs. Miller to birds, alive and free, and hardly had she begun to know them, when she dropped all other work and devoted herself to them alone. For seven or eight years now she has given her days and almost her nights to this study, and every line of her writing in this direction is original observation. The work of others she never draws upon; what she tells is always what she has seen for herself, and the one thing she claims for herself is the strictest accuracy, both of seeing and of repeating. Her work in this field, after publication in the *Atlantic* and other magazines, has been made into two volumes, "Bird Ways" and "In Nesting Time."

THE GIRLS' SKETCHING CAMP.

"A PARTY of girls! Humph!"

"They'll quarrel," said brothers.

"They'll be imprudent," said mothers.

"They'll be cheated," said fathers.

"Who ever heard of such a thing?" said Mrs. Grundy.

"Besides, they don't know how to take care of themselves," began the brothers again.

"And they'll be sure to get into trouble," put in the mothers.

"And spend no end of money," groaned the fathers.

"And people will talk about them," added Mrs. Grundy.

Persuasions, arguments, and predictions alike failed. These girls had planned the expedition, and they carried it out, with some concessions to a doubting and scoffing world. They did not actually camp out, in the roughest meaning of the words, and they did consent to a "Dragon," though it must be confessed she was of the mildest. Her age and gray hairs fitted her for the position of figure-head of propriety, and nothing more was needed.

The party of girls, then—Cooper Institute art students—fourteen in number, with boxes and bags and bundles for a month's absence, sailed out of New York Harbor one fine Thursday evening of July, in the good ship *Eleanora*, bound for Casco Bay.

"I can hardly believe we are off," said Nun—short for None Such—as they leaned over the rail, looking at the ever-widening gulf which separated them from the waving and cheering crowd on shore. And truly it did seem doubtful, even up to the last moment, for parents and elder sisters, brothers and friends, had crowded the deck, armed with extra wraps, boxes of candy, lemons, and time-tables, information about

trains and life-preservers, and, above all, volumes of—advice.

Nun's remark brought out a hearty response,—"Yes, we're really off now, and *nobody* can prevent;" and fourteen very happy girls settled themselves to enjoy the lovely evening and the quiet sail up the East River to the Sound.

Perhaps a jollier party never set out from a driving American city, and surely a more delightful month can never come into the lives of the girls than began on that eventful evening when they started alone for the home they had engaged in the backwoods of Maine. Among the multitude of letters they had received from boarding-house keepers, summer-resort people, and others of their kind, one sentence in a letter from Maine had come to them with the resistlessness of fate.

"Nature in these remote regions," wrote the daughter of the Pine-tree State, "has not combed her hair, but in her tangled tresses she is enchanting beyond description."

Delicious prospect!—with Mother Nature herself for a pattern—no dress, no parade, no "society requirements!" "Ah! there we will go." And there they did go.

The ship steamed on up the East River, past the dismal islands whose names are familiar in police records, past the ghastly wreck of the *Seawanhaka*, out into the beautiful Sound. The girls' party divided naturally into two parts, by ties of old friendship—and a mutual lunch. In one part, eleven staid, well behaved damsels, who might safely travel alone from Maine to Florida, with Nun as their head; in the other part the three madcaps of the expedition—Clip, full of mischief to the lips; Peggy, her bosom-friend, ready to suggest any prank that did not occur to Clip's fertile brain; the Dragon's daughter, or D. D.—and the Dragon herself, to keep them in order.

Lunch was dispatched; the woman who was determined to be seasick, and had carefully established herself in the most favorable spot in the cabin, was sketched, and the girls set out to explore the resources of the steamer. Under the awning at the back of the deck were the arm-chairs and the passengers. Out in

front, temptingly retired and unoccupied, was the sharp and narrow bow.

They gathered near the pilot-house, and cast longing looks ahead, but between them and the desired point was only a plank, with one stretched cord for a rail. Was that a hint to passengers that the bow was forbidden? So much the more did they desire it. Clip looked into the pilot-house. A pleasant-faced man stood at the wheel.

"Captain," he said, "we girls are dying to walk the plank: may we do it?"

"Certainly," he said, "if you dare, and if you won't stand in the bow. I must see over your heads."

He was thanked, and in a few minutes shawls, rugs, and girls were safely established in a c zy heap on the deck forward, where they watched the go geous sunset, talked over their plans, wondered over what sort of a place was "Duncan's," and if the unchanging bill of fare would be pork and molasses, as had been predicted. And as the hours rolled on, they saw the stars come out, named the light-houses as they passed, and at last recrossed the plank, and went below, where each girl drilled herself in getting into a life-preserver, and then—being on the water—"turned in."

"Now, girls," said Clip, the next morning, tossing her saucy head with an air of compressed wisdom, and indicating with a sweep of her hand the smaller party of four, "we are the four chaperons, and if any of you want information about the coast, or the trains at Portland, or the direction of the wind, or the rate of sailing or anything—you can ask me."

The girls indignantly refused to allow her the honor she had assumed, but this pleasant little fiction it pleased Miss Clip to keep up all the way. Whenever the Dragon, attracted by shrieks of girlish laughter, or signs of interest on the part of passengers, hurried away to her madcaps, Clip would always welcome her with effusion, put her arm through hers, and say, with dignity, "The four chaperons must keep together."

What this lively party meant, and where they were going, was a subject of interest to passengers.

"It's a boarding-school," Clip would say, demurely, when any one looked curious.

"It's an orphan asylum," Peggy would add.

"We're maniacs," one of the quiet ones put in, but she was quickly groaned down.

About noon the steamer stopped at Martha's Vineyard, and the party went ashore, where Peggy managed to throw stones "like a boy," and began to crow over the rest, when they rose in their might and put her down by declaring with one voice that they scorned to throw stones like a boy; they preferred to do it in the girls' way.

"How improper, Peggy!" said Clip, severely. "How dare you throw like a boy, and then brag of it? This is a girls' party, and boys are not to be quoted to us."

"Hadn't we better go back?" suggested some one, after awhile.

"The captain said he'd wait an hour for me," said Clip, sweetly.

"What!" exclaimed the Dragon.

"He said he'd wait an hour any time for a young lady," she hastened to add.

Groans, and cries of "Oh!" from the beach.

"Now, my young lady," said the Dragon, taking her arm as they walked back, "I shall have to look out for you. You musn't talk to the captain too much."

"No, 'm," said Clip meekly. "I like the engineer ever so much better. He's perfectly lovely."

"Clip! Clip!" said the alarmed Dragon, "you haven't been talking to him?"

"Oh no, of course not. How absurd! He talked to me."

"And you let him?"—with horror.

"Why, what could I do, 'm?" said Clip, turning a pair of surprised brown eyes to her monitor. "You wouldn't have me put my hands over his mouth?"

"You could walk away," said the perplexed Dragon.

"But that would be rude," said Clip, blandly; "mamma always told me so. And he says he'll get us a truck for our trunks in Portland," went on that child-like young person, who knew how the Dragon dreaded the appaling pile of baggage which goes to fourteen damsels for a month's absence, even though limited to one trunk each.

"Well," said she, somewhat mollified, "but you

really must be careful, Clip. You know a party like ours attracts attention."

"Oh, I'm a model of discretion," said Clip. "The captain said I might sit next to him at the dinner-table, and he would take care of me."

"Oh!" groaned the Dragon, "you are incorrigible."

The next morning found the steamer settled in her dock in Portland, and the question of reaching the railway station became important. It was a mile distant, and the girls wished to walk. The engineer, a genuine New-Englander and a gentleman, offered to show them the way, and the Dragon said she would take a hack and some of the hand baggage, while the trunks went ahead on a truck.

A hack was hired to take one passenger and as much baggage as she chose. The hackmen seemed a jolly set of men: every face was on a broad grin as the satchels and boxes and baskets went in through the windows on both sides, before, behind, under, and over the solitary passenger. When she was well buried, and each girl had but one or two packages, which she was ashamed to add to the load, the procession moved off, and the horses started. At the first corner the driver leaned over to his passenger. "We may as well hev the rest o' them things," said he, smiling.

"So we may," assented the victim, from under her mountain. He stopped. She called, "Girls, we want the rest of the baggage."

Nothing loath, they surrounded the hack as flies a molasses cup. Every one emptied her hands, and followed the engineer, who carried himself with the dignity of a professor at the head of a boarding-school.

"Here, Jim," shouted the hack-driver, as they drew up at the station, "help the lady out with her satchel."

"Jim" came up to the door of the hack. First he stared, and then grinned, and so did everybody who saw that curious load. The driver and the porter, stimulated by sundry small coins, gayly carried in the things, and piled them on one of the long station benches, which they completely filled.

A horrified Maine woman sat in the station. "Is that all with one family?" she whispered, in a stage "aside," to the woman sweeping out.

"All with one lady," was the annihilating reply, and the questioner subsided, absolutely struck dumb.

The next moment the girls came in, laughing and talking, in high spirits. The "Orderly"—so called by way of contraries—who had an outside pocket, rattled the whole fifteen checks in it, and looked for a baggage-man, while the rest inquired about trains and bought their tickets, and a restaurant-man, whose door opened into the waiting-room, disappeared in some obscure corner, and in a twinkling hung out a sign, "Ice-Cream."

When they entered the train, they occupied nearly every seat on one side of the car. Clip and the D. D. were in the first, Peggy in the second, and the Dragon third. This arrangement rather put Clip on the lead, which she was nothing loath to assume, and the consequence was a succession of pranks, in which she readily persuaded the whole line to join, always, of course, excepting the Dragon, who, whenever she could bring her face to the proper degree of sternness, tried her best to preserve dignity.

Inspired by the sight of Clip's round eyeglasses, which gave her the look of an owl with an inquiring mind, and desiring above everything to pass for a Boston school, they all put on glasses—near-sighted glasses, gray beach glasses, and one pair, large and round and very dark-colored, that gave the wearer the appearance of a new species of insect. Then thrusting their heads out of the windows, they faced the people hurrying by to the train. First respect, and then amusement, was seen in every face.

"Here comes a howling swell," whispered Clip, suddenly, "the last we shall see for a month."

In an instant every head was out, and that young man fairly quailed before the battery of glasses.

The next joke was suggested by the advent of the conductor who was a little more imposing than ordinary officials of his degree. A whisper ran down the line, and every girl on that side, as he solemnly punched her ticket, asked him earnestly, "What time do we get to Steep Falls?"

He answered the first, "We call every station"; the second, "In about an hour." At the third he stared, for the station was exceedingly insignificant,

and a passenger rarely stopped there. At the fourth he began to suspect a joke, and relapsed into grim silence, without the ghost of a smile.

That car-load was curiously divided: on one side a party who felt they were out of the world, as it were, and could do as they pleased, and on the other, people on the way to a camp-meeting at Lake Sebago. At first these people were very stern, but they soon entered into the fun of the thing, and were almost as jolly as the girls when they left the train at the lake.

Now that Clip had started the fun, the sober girls caught the spirit. Clip was taken at her word as a guide-book, and questions about stations, and time-tables, and so forth were showered on her, one girl following another, till she rebelled, and told the next one who came to take her seat like a good little girl, and she would know in due time.

The Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad runs through a country of wonderful beauty, and jokes were forgotten as they whisked past charming woods, distant mountains, and that most lovely of lakes, Sebago, with its beautiful shores.

On the platform at the station where they left the train stood one man, a smiling farmer—Mr. Duncan—and drawn up beside it were several indescribable superannuated vehicles to convey the party to his house, seven miles back in the country. Now they could find out about their future home, and as soon as they were started, Clip began on the driver, a sharp Maine farmer, who drove his own "team," and, in the language of the country, "was nobody's fool."

"What sort of a place is Duncan's?" she began.

"It's a nice tidy farm-house up on the mountain," he replied.

"Well," went on Clip, "do you cook your corn on the cob out here?"

"I believe they do," said the driver; "leastways I gen'rally hev mine so."

"It'll have to be cut off for me," said Clip, "I've lost all my front teeth."

"Du tell!" said the driver; I shouldn't hev thought it, from your age."

"How old do you take me to be?"

"Wa'al, fourteen or so, I jedge."

"And you a Yankee. How do you judge?"

"By your talk, mostly," said the man quietly.

The load laughed and thought Clip had the worst that time. She was not silent long.

"Do you have surf bathing up here?" came next.

"Wa'al, no—not on the mountains," said the man.

"Why, all we girls have brought bathing suits," cried Clip, "and we expect of course to bathe."

"Wa'al, you might find a spring or so up to Duncan's, and there's we'ls all around," he answered.

"Are there any young gentlemen up here?" asked Clip, after a pause.

"Not one."

"Any girls?"

"Plenty."

"Why's that, I'd like to know?"

"Wa'al, as soon as a boy can walk, up here, he walks away from Maine."

"What a dreadful country it must be!" said Clip. "Not that we care," she hastened to add. "We've left New York to get rid of society and gentlemen's attentions. We're suffering for a rest." So she went on all the way.

Meanwhile, the horses were climbing the hills, which they did on a gallop, by-the-way, and they were passing through a delightful country—woods, glimpses of mountains and lakes, and everywhere a display of rich summer colors that almost set them wild. The farms themselves seemed not more than half redeemed from wildness. Everywhere nature encroached upon art; ferns fringed the roads, wildwoodsy things stole into the fence corners, green mosses covered the rough log watering-trough beside the road; even the fences were the fantastic roots of giant trees, bleached by sun and storm to dazzling whiteness.

At last they stopped before a broad old-fashioned house, its paint washed off by the storms of many winters, and "Ætna" nailed over the door like a charm.

A motherly-looking gray-haired woman appeared at open door. The laughing load seemed to stun her.

Doubtless her heart sank like lead as the possibilities of the charge she had assumed came over her. She said, helplessly, "Is—is Miss —— here?"

Miss —— was the sweet-faced Nun, and she was there.

"We feel acquainted with Miss ——," said the hostess, apologetically, after the party had been introduced, and she found them not quite so wild as she had feared.

The house was on the side of a mountain, and in mist or fog the whole grand scene from its front door, of mountains, woods, and lakes, was blotted out, so that it gave the effect of being at the end of the world, the veritable "jumping-off place."

The farm-house was not large, and its resources were pieced out by a small rough carpenter-shop in the orchard, which was fitted up as an outlying cottage, and which gave the party just the touch of camping out that they desired. It had been made fresh and sweet inside by an entire ceiling of new pine boards, odorous as the woods themselves, while the outside, guiltless of paint, retained the rich tints which years of sun and storm had given it. It held the usual quantity of bare bedroom furniture of a farm-house, and it was intended to accommodate five girls.

The Nun, Clip, Peggy, the Orderly, and D. D.—the madcaps and the mischiefs of the party—pounced upon this delicious retreat at once, and claimed it for their own, proceeding forthwith to make it into a home. From the five trunks came as many treasures as from the magical bag of the house-mother in the *Swiss Family Robinson*—curtains to partition off the bedroom, gay table-cover, dainty vases, and colored glass dishes, and a tiny clock, which gave the room an air of refinement at once. Before an hour, ground-pine and clematis decorated the walls, ferns and golden-rod nodded over the glass, trailing vines and sweet woodsy things filled the vases. The sun came in at the door, and good Mr. Duncan brought a piece of old sail-cloth and put it up with poles and crotched sticks for an awning.

The whole was charming, and a name was sought. Many were suggested, and at last the happy thought came.

"It's the Larks' Nest," said Clip, suddenly, "and I'll do my best to make it deserve its name."

She was as good as her word, the Larks' Nest it was; and sundry sounds of girlish revelry that sometimes reached the house—christened by the steady ones in it the Bee-Hive—after the "bees" were in bed, proved that "larks" were really there.

The first dash into country wildness and freedom came before they had been at Duncan's an hour, in the shape of a laughing invitation from the farmer to take a ride upon a load of hay which was about to start for a barn half a mile away. Nothing was farther from his thoughts than that the city young ladies would accept the offer, and his face was a study of amazement as the girls, with a rapturous "Oh, may we?" rushed for the wagon, gayly mounted the wheels, and to the top of the low load in a minute, while the oxen started off for the trip. At the end of the ride they divided into two parties to examine their surroundings. One squad explored the mountain on the side of which the farm-house stood, and from the top looked upon a scene too grand and too wide for their brushes; while the other went through the orchard to a set of bars where they could step at once from the farm into a bit of genuine wilderness, noble old woods on which the hands of man had left no trace.

To fourteen wandering damsels the arrival of the mail was the important event of the day. The post-office was a mile away through the woods, but never was a day so stormy or so warm that there were not volunteers to take the tramp, while on pleasant days the whole party would go. Mail began to pour into that quiet office in a way to astonish the sleepy postmistress. Letters, sometimes thirty at once, with papers, magazines, and packages of all sorts, from boxes of rose-buds, and candy, to extra clothing and artists' materials.

Life had quickly settled into regularity. Every morning sketch-books and easels, paint-boxes and palettes, came out; the girls broke up into groups of two or three, and started out in various ways to work. Not a picturesque spot but had sketchers encamped about it: a dilapidated set of bars, the scorn of cows but the delight of an artist; a pile of rocks in an

orchard, the thorn in the flesh to a farmer, who stared open-eyed to find it attractive to somebody; a path through the woods; or a luxuriant group of tall ferns. The neighborhood was an unworked mine of wealth. One could not turn in any direction without seeing a charming spot that she longed to carry away with her, and the only regret of the enthusiastic students was that each one had not two pairs of hands to work with. Dinner brought them all home, and then came criticism, comparison, and much pleasant talk over canvas and paper, ending—in the Larks' Nest—in nailing the studies to the wall, and making ready for the next day's work.

Before long some of the daily needs of girlish humanity became pressing, and a party was made up to visit the "store" of the neighborhood—a barn-like place, with drugs and dress goods, hardware and groceries, all in one room.

"Have you straw hats?" asked the first girl.

The clerk was sorry, but they were out of hats.

"What! no hats?" in a chorus from the party who had been seized with an ambition for broad-rim hats.

"I should like some shoe-buttons," began the second.

These, alas, they never kept.

"What! no shoe-buttons?" in one breath again.

"Please show me some ribbons," spoke up the third.

The clerk regretted to say that ribbons were not in the stock.

"What! no ribbons?" cried the chorus in dismay.

"Writing-paper, if you please, cried the fourth, sure that she at least could supply her wants.

The clerk was embarrassed. He began to have a horror of the chorus, and hesitated whether he had better slip out of a back door and let his inquisitors find out for themselves his stock, or whether he had better laugh. He decided on the latter just in time, for Peggy began:

"I want some rye flour for sunburn."

The man shook his head.

"What! no rye flour?"

Clip had been looking about, and seeing potatoes, a

thought struck her. "I say, girls," she began, in eager whispers, "now we're out here in the woods, and no callers, we might eat—*onions!*"

"Onions! onions!" whispered one and another. "Delightful! so we will!"

"I *love* onions," cried Clip; and turning to the amused shopkeeper, added, "Please send us up a bushel."

The man laughed, but again he shook his head.

"What! no onions? Oh!" and thoroughly disgusted with the country store, the party went out in search of another. After that, whenever in their rambles, which extended for many miles around, they came near to a store they invariably went in and asked for those articles, expressing their surprise in chorus as at first, and always ending with the demand for onions, which, by-the-way, they were never able to get in that land of farms and gardens, though Mrs. Duncan offered to send to Portland for them.

One night the Larks had a fright. To begin with, Peggy, Clip, and D.D. had not only the ordinary home correspondence to attend to, but each of them wore a significant ring, and each had many letters to write to what Clip called "the beloved object." One night, therefore, they sat around the table engaged in this occupation. Nun and Orderly were in bed, and, in a sleepy way, exchanged opinions on the subject.

"I'll never be engaged," began the Nun.

"Nor I," responded the Orderly; "it's too much bother."

The "engaged" Larks made some saucy speeches back, and at a late hour, having finished their letters, started for bed, when they made the unpleasant discovery that the water jugs were empty, and there was never time to fill them in the morning. Now the water in that beautiful spot, with thirteen lakes and ponds in sight, had to be brought in a barrel, and was then placed in the wood-shed, which, according to Maine fashion, formed a connecting link between the house and barn.

The three girls started out in the dark, the way being straight and familiar, but before they reached the gate, they were startled by a rustle in the bushes on one side, and a sort of choked breathing. As three

souls with but a single thought, they turned and fled to the Nest—not to give it up, but to prepare for war. They girded on their armor. D. D. took her pistol—a savage silver-trimmed weapon, the scorn of brothers; Clip armed herself with the big dinner horn, which Mrs. Duncan had provided in case of illness or alarm in the Larks' Nest; and Peggy, like a sensible soul, took the lamp. They sallied out, and a queer procession they made, with long, straggling shadows thrown by the lamp, enough to frighten any ordinary ghost out of his wits. This was probably the case, for they saw nothing, and having filled their pitchers, went back to bed.

But sleep was not to be won yet. They were seized with a fit of punning worse than usual, which was saying much for it. For an hour these five Larks wasted their breath in this way, and then gradually became quiet. Not for long, however. Soon the sweet strains of music breathed through a comb arose in the Nest. Everybody roused up. There sat Peggy on the side of the bed treating her sisters to an air from *Fatinitza*. As one girl they descended upon her, and despoiled her of her instrument.

She was not discouraged. Peggy rarely was. She raised her voice in the classic strains of "Wrass'lin Jacob," and then "Swing low, sweet chariot," with the genuine negro twang. Inquiring into this entertainment, the Larks discovered that she had an aching tooth, and that was her peculiar way of insisting on sympathy. They ransacked their stores, and at last quieted her nerves with a dose of—siccatif, and once more settled themselves to sleep.

The days were passed mostly in work, making sketches in the beautiful country about them, but the evenings were given to play and entertainments of various sorts. One that made a merry evening was a fancy-dress party, where being without fear of Mrs. Grundy or "gentlemen spectators," and with resources limited to the contents of their trunks, the costumes were capital. The Marquis de Lafayette in blue trousers (of a bathing suit), elegant light drab cutaway coat, with the long tails now worn on ladies' basques, lined with scarlet satin, laces and stock of the most formidable dimensions; a "swell" of the "swell-

est" description, similarly gotten up; an African "mammy" as nurse, with immense silver spectacles, and face well painted, carrying a delicate baby in long white dress (the smallest and lightest of the party); a Highlander with kilt of a plaid shawl; a fish girl crying her wares, which were sticks of candy on a stretcher.

Another was a literary and musical entertainment given by the "Bees" to the Larks, where the Peake Sisters in immense steeple hats and Quaker dress sang hymns and offered refreshments from bandboxes and pillow-case bags, and where was read with great applause an original "pome" of the acrostic order, of which a specimen verse or two will serve to show the literary merit.

"J is for jolly; the word will explain
Our usual condition since we've been in Maine.
Forgotten all rules of formal propriety,
We revel in nonsense of every variety.

"L for the Larks, fine, amiable birds;
They remind you of geese, but they're wise as owls,
They live in a state of remarkable unity,
And I promise you they are a lively community.

Every entertainment, of whatever nature, was sure to end with the "Hindoo Dance," a great favorite, and an indescribably funny thing, for which, after one or two trials, Mr. Duncan kindly prepared by putting props under the parlor floor.

One cloud from the outside world, the domain of the proprieties, still hung over their horizon. It was a party of "Boston school-ma'ams," who were spending their summer at a neighboring farm-house. These young women never rode in carts, nor blew horns, nor roused the country generally. They conducted themselves in the most proper manner, and were supposed to be models of culture. At every unconventional deed—a ride on a hay wagon, a wade after water-lilies, a foot-race through the woods—the first thought was "What do you suppose the B. S. M.'s would say to that?"

Through much talking these innocent persons grew to be quite a bugaboo, the one crumpled rose leaf

which took from the perfection of their present life. At last even this faint cloud was to be removed. One evening the dreaded B. S. M.'s came in solemn array, in best "Sunday-go-to-meeting" clothes, to call on the New York students. Great was the fall from the ideal pedestals on which they had been placed by the magic of a name. They proved—well, to be quite harmless; and henceforth the girls troubled themselves no more, but sang and shouted, and enjoyed themselves as seemed to them good.

The last week of this delightful month dawned, and the girls, realizing that their fun was nearly over, roused themselves in earnest to the duty of getting as much as possible into that short six days. One day most of the party went off on a picnic in a hay-cart, though poor D. D. staid in bed with the toothache which puffed her face to twice its usual size. She did not hesitate to sacrifice her comfort to her art, however, for when bolstered up, holding a big bowl of ginger tea, which kind Mrs. Duncan had brewed and sent out to her, and which, much against her inclination, she felt obliged to drink, she turned to the waiting messenger, saying, plaintively, "Must I take it all?" a picture of herself suddenly rose in her mind, and she turned to Peggy, the rapid sketcher, with "Peggy, wouldn't this make a good pose?"

"Capital!" cried Peggy; "don't stir." And in two minutes she was down in black and white—"The Swell D. D.," as the girls called her.

And now, to crown their precious last days, arrived the Master, to overlook their work, and accompany them home. This gentleman—a well-known New York artist—has the fortune or misfortune (whichever it may be thought), to look extremely young; so before he arrived he was dubbed the "Old Master," and by that name he shall be known in this "ower-true tale." He was charmed with the scenery, the air, and, above all, the Lark's Nest, which he declared he should like to transport to New York just as it was.

Now every day had its expedition, of which the best was a sail the length of Lake Sebago, and up what the local guide-book called "the sweetly sinuous Songo." Sweetly sinuous they found it, and shallow as well. While they were assiduously cultivating the sentiments

proper to the occasion, Clip forgetting to joke, and Peggy to pun, the Old Master reading aloud Longfellow's poem of the Songo River, and the captain pointing out the attractions—Peaked Mountain, Rattlesnake Mountain, One-tree Island, a cave much frequented by Hawthorne in his strange, solitary boyhood—suddenly they found themselves aground. It was not to be wondered at, for the channel was but two feet six inches deep, while the steamer drew two feet two inches of water.

While they were looking about for help, and two men with long poles were trying to push them off, a man appeared driving out from the shore to their assistance—a pair of horses!

The Old Master, falling from the heights of poetry to this ridiculous accident, was equal to the occasion. Assuming the gruff, authoritative tones of a stage captain, he ordered, "Throw a line over one of those piles, and haul her up into the wind's eye."

The captain looked around, smiled as at child's play, and said, quietly, "She'll get along fust-rate with just shovin'." Then turning to the man in the water, he added, "Just shove her off at the stern, will you, Jim?"

Jim shoved, and the passengers looked over the rail at the absurd sight of two men pushing a big steamer off the bar. But it was done, and they went on, winding in and out, and meeting and overtaking hundreds of turtles on the same journey, of which Clip, who was making a map of the river, kept a record. One of them, of somewhat large size, swam in front of the steamer, and with the late disaster fresh in their minds, they pushed him away with a pole, lest they should get aground on him. They went on through a lock, when they left the steamer, and went up a flight of stairs to another and smaller one; through Naples Bay; past a veritable Rudder Grange where they looked almost hopefully for Pomona and the Boarder; in sight of the home of Artemus Ward; to the village where a wagon was to meet them for the ride home.

Here the Old Master—who, though he lived in the "Hive," proved to be as larky as the Larks themselves—provided the party with tin horns, and they started on their long moonlight drive. Of that ride home, the

serenades to the villagers, the comb arias, the horn solos, the opera and oratorio airs, the college and Moody and Sankey songs—the fun generally—any description would be weak.

The next night the Larks distinguished themselves by a serenade to the Old Master. With combs and horns and voices they softly rendered under his window airs which they thought suitable to the situation: "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls," (appropriate by contrast), and still more significant,, "Douglas, Douglas, tender and true," winding up with "Farewell, my own."

The listener, behind his screen of vines, appreciated and enjoyed, and repaid them with soft applause, which disturbed no one, and the Bees slept calmly in their cells through the whole.

The day before the last one had been set apart from the beginning for a grand exhibition in the Larks' Nest to the country people who had shown such a kindly interest in the party. Everything else had been done; picnics, water-lily gathering, rowing, wading, blueb'n (in the language of the natives), frogging, barn frolicking, and so forth. The wind up was to be a fitting conclusion to a perfect month.

Early in the morning the Larks began preparations. The beams of the nest were decorated with wheat, oats, ground-pine, and red berries; the curtains before the beds, as the place of honor, were given to four large photographs of the O. M.'s successful paintings in late exhibitions; and the rest of the walls were completely covered from floor to roof with the work of the girls, for notwithstanding all their fun, work had gone steadily on from day to day. Sketches in oil and water-color, distemper, charcoal, sepia, pencil, and pen and ink, set off with snowy thistle puffs, ferns, colored leaves, birds' nests in twigs and branches, long sprays of clematis, and running evergreen. One of the most effective things was a curtain of unbleached muslin on which was a group—the heads of the five Larks —as silhouettes, of which Clip said that when the Larks got their heads together, something was sure to come of it.

Clip, who wore at her girdle an imposing note-book and pencil, and was called the "Historian," was

appointed to receive the guests. When their arrival was announced, she went up to the house, where she found a dozen or more sheepish-looking men and boys around the door, talking to Mr. Duncan about pigs and stock, and the crops. In the parlor she found perhaps twenty women sitting around the wall in Sunday clothes, not knowing exactly what to do with themselves. She invited them out, and took the head of the procession.

The nest was, clear of furniture, about fifteen feet square, and it had fifty or sixty guests—a regular crush. Their comments were amusing. "My gorry" (the Maine oath), "can't they paint!" was the first criticism of an honest old farmer, inspired probably by quantity rather than quality.

"Wa'al, wa'al, this is really quite a show!" said another.

"That's a sunset glow—ain't it nice!" said an old lady, poking her parasol into a ten-minute sketch of a gorgeous sunset.

"That's awful pretty!" and, "When that's finished it 'll look nice," were common criticisms.

One old lady was not in the least awed. "My Ed has done them things by yards and yards," she said to a companion, who only opened her lips to say, "Yes, yes, yes."

"Seems to me that looks sort o' nateral, but I can't quite make it out," said one of a sketch very hasty and quite in the "impressionist" style.

One old mother was more interested in the exhibitors. She turned to the O. M. "Air you really teacher o' them girls, and how old be you?"

"You call that a dog?" scoffingly said a boy who had been brought in to admire the portrait of the family dog; "I wouldn't 'a known what it was: it looks like a pig."

The exhibition was over; the guests went home; the girls felt that the show was ended, the curtain about to drop. In silence each camper took down her sketches, dragged her trunk out, and began to pack.

At noon the next day the party stood on the platform of the station at Steep Falls, ready for the

train. Suddenly the O. M. appeared on the scene, his face beaming with fun and mischief. He had discovered in a corner of the waiting-room a bass drum almost as big as he was, and he shouldered it. He stepped on to the platform; he called for recruits.

"Let's go out with éclat. Let's give a final and fitting end to this grandest of trips. Let's drop the curtain with applause."

There was no lack of congenial spirits; from shawl-strap and bundle came the horns, and each one fell into line behind the leader, and once and again around that station they gayly marched, drum beating and horns blowing.

But the whistle sounds; the train draws up; the party embark, and all too rapidly are whirled back to the everyday world, where Mrs. Grundy holds sway, and girls must behave themselves, while

> "Around Sebago's lonely lake
> There lingers not a breeze to break
> The mirror which its waters make."

One thing this girl camping party has proved, namely, that a party of young women can manage and carry through to success a delightful expedition, with benefit to health and not utter depletion of purse.

Yea, verily, and yet another: that the presence of so many unattended gentlewomen turns every American man into a gentleman and a brother, ready to be of service in any way, and so long as they behave themselves, even though they indulge in girlish fun, they have not to dread the slightest rudeness of word or look in the rural districts of New England.

A CRISIS.

BY

LIZZIE W. CHAMPNEY.

Sincerely yours-
Elizabeth W. Chambers

ELIZABETH W. CHAMPNEY.

MRS. CHAMPNEY, whose proper name is Elizabeth, is the daughter of Judge S. B. Williams, and was born at Springfield, O., Febuary 6, 1850. She was educated at "Vassar," graduating from that institution in 1869, and it was her esteem and attachment to this, her alma mater, which induced her to give that popular and suggestive name to that interesting series of books beginning with "Three Vassar Girls Abroad," and which consists of seven good sized volumes. One would hardly realize that the easy reading books which she has given in such quick succession to the public, were the result of the most painstaking research, was it not known that such is the fact.

Mrs. Champney has resided much abroad, and has never pretended to describe places or communities without having first conscientiously visited and investigated them, and searched out all the historical facts which could throw any light upon the era, or people represented. As aids to her literary work she has visited England, France, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, and other well-known and less known portions of Europe. Her observations and experiences, thus vitalized by actual contact with strange nationalities, found in many cases their first expression in *Harper's Magazine*, and also in the *Century*, for which periodicals she has furnished eighty or more articles—including a very interesting series on Portugal—and those attractive papers entitled "A Neglected Corner of Europe," and "In the Footsteps of Futuney and Régnault." Since her return to the United States Mrs. Champney has written in all, fifteen books; novels, stories for juveniles, and really historical works under cover of stories, mostly adapted to young people. The novels are, "Bourbon Lilies," and "Romany and Rue." Of the juveniles, "All Around a Palette," and "Howling

Wolf and His Trick Pony" appear to be the most popular. The historical series include such fascinating stories as "Great Grandmother Girls in New France" and in Mexico; and in these semi-historical stories Mrs. Champney carefully avoids all such embellishments and fancies as would mislead her young readers into historical misconceptions: she knows how to make them bright and pleasant without drawing on her inner consciousness, where facts are concerned. She can be humorous too when she pleases—witness that laughter provoking little poem published in *St. Nicholas*, for 1876, "How Persimmon Took Cah ob de Baby." Beside her magazine stories for children she has written fourteen juvenile books.

Our "Lizzy Champney," as Elizabeth Wheeler, was married to Mr. J. Wells Champney, the well-known artist, on May 15, 1873, a union peculiarly felicitious in both a domestic and artistic sense, since Mr. Champney has been the illustrator to a great extent of his wife's books; ever appreciative and able to seize, as a stranger could scarcely so well do, the very spirit of scenes described and in many of which he had participated. Both possess artistic natures, but working in different fields they mutually aid and inspirit each other. They have one son, Edouard Frère, who is also ready and able to give his mother "points" as to what will take with the boys.

Mr. and Mrs. Champney's summer home is in Deerfield, Mass. It was in this town that the Indian massacre took place which suggested to her the narrative story relating to "New France." Their winter residence is in New York.

A CRISIS.

MR. JONATHAN T. WARD, or, as his card more modernly expressed it, "J. Templeton Ward, Jun.," looked like a man supremely satisfied with his fortune and himself.

He had just received a particularly gratifying letter from a sister in New York, calling him to the city on a flattering errand, and as he entered the cars this pleasant October morning the universe seemed irradiated with his own private sense of happiness. The only drawback to his perfect enjoyment was the fact that on this train there was no parlor-car. It was vexatious to be obliged to breathe the same atmosphere with the common herd, and to submit his scented personality to the contamination of proximity to peanut-eating rustics, travel-worn cinereous pilgrims, not overmannerly children, and the inevitable baby. He adapted himself to circumstances, however, with the ready *savoir-faire* of an experienced man of the world, turning a seat, and elongating his finely proportioned form after the manner of the heraldic "bend"—an honorable ordinary which crosses an escutcheon in a diagonal direction—taking up as much space as possible. He dropped his hand-bag, cane, and light overcoat carelessly in the vacant corners, and thus comfortably extended, even the public car seemed bearable, and he found himself able to contemplate his plebeian and more crowded neighbors with urbane condescension.

After a few moments his fingers instinctively sought an inner pocket, and he re-read the letter which had so contributed to his self-gratulation. It was from his favorite sister Rose, who had married Henry Molineux, a wealthy broker, and whose happy married life had caused no diminution in her home affection. The Molineux were in their way very grand people, grander than the Wards, for they counted larger store of

shekels and lands and antique heirlooms, and Rose's alliance had been fully approved by her brother. Rose herself was a bit of a match-maker, and had long cherished a dream of a double connection between the two families by the marriage of her brother with her husband's sister, Miss Winifred Molineux. Unfortunately for her plans, shortly after her own wedding her husband's family had sailed for Europe, remaining abroad four years, and the objects of her romantic schemes had never met. Very deftly, however, Mrs. Rose Molineux had managed her cards, keeping up Miss Winifred's interest in the unknown paragon by means of shrewd allusions and items of interest, but never waxing sufficiently enthusiastic to alarm the shy girl with apprehensions of a matrimonial pitfall arranged for her unsuspecting feet. With her brother Mrs. Molineux's manœuvres had been less strategic and delicate. The matter had been frankly discussed between them, and Mr. J. Templeton Ward acknowledged himself prepared to become Miss Winifred's willing slave at first sight. Indeed, he nearly persuaded himself that he was already in love with her, and he brooded over his sister's letter with all the benign serenity of an accepted lover.

"DEAR TEMPLETON" (wrote Mrs. Molineux),—"Henry's father and mother have at length returned from Europe, and have agreed to let me have Winifred for the winter. I want you to drop everything else, and devote yourself to us, to escort Winifred to all the exhibitions, symphony rehearsals, receptions, etc., of the season. She is looking remarkably well, and what is better, has returned *entirely heart free*. I was afraid some French marquis would be attracted by her *dot*, and snatch her up. I know that you are very sensitive on such matters, and will not thank me for telling you, but by the death of her Uncle Robert in Pernambuco she has come into possession of thirty thousand dollars, which, in addition to her expectations from Papa Molineux, makes her a very pretty heiress. Do not let anything delay your coming. As What's-his-name says, 'A crisis comes once in the life of every man.'"

There is a trite old saying in regard to cup and lip which I forbear quoting, remarking only that it is a

mistake to confide delicate porcelain to baby fingers. Mr. Ward's cup would probably never have slipped had it not been for a baby, of whose influence upon his fate he was as yet blissfully unconscious. It was a sorry day for him when the three weird sisters converted Mr. Templeton Ward's cup of happiness—which had hitherto been as carefully guarded as though it had been a veritable bit of blossomed Dresden or a fragile specimen of Sèvres in Pompadour rose—into a plaything for a ruthless and irresponsible baby.

Mr. Ward had drifted into a day-dream, when he was recalled suddenly to the actualities of the present by a sweet voice at his elbow inquiring diffidently, "Is this seat engaged?"

Turning sharply, he saw a dignified but youthful lady, with a face like that of one of Raphael's Madonnas. His impressible heart paid her homage at once, and he was about to spring to his feet with spontaneous politeness, when the pleasurable emotion was checked by one of dismay. She held in her arms a baby—well dressed, neat, chubby, bright, and, to a parental eye, a cherub of a child; to Mr. J. Templeton Ward, his pet aversion and peculiar horror.

He looked at the child with an expression of intense disapprobation. "I think you will be more comfortable at the other end of the car," he remarked, slowly raising his eyeglasses and surveying the perspective of crowded seats.

"I will try another car," replied the lady, with quiet dignity.

Mr. Templeton Ward's good-breeding asserted itself. "Indeed, madam, I had not observed that there were no vacant seats. Pray do not imagine me so egregiously selfish;" and the little lady was quickly seated as his *vis-à-vis*. For some time the baby conducted itself in an exemplary manner, drumming on the window-pane, and watching the rapidly whirling landscape, and Mr. Templeton Ward had time to observe that the lady was dressed in that alleviated mourning which allows certain concessions to fashion and becomingness in the toleration of white at throat and wrists, and solitaire pearls in either ear.

"Widowhood," he mused to himself—"widowhood which has passed the first poignancy of grief, and had

entered the lonely stage which finds a solitary life almost unendurable." He noticed with keen, observant eye the curling sweep of the long jet lashes which shaded the delicately rounded ivory cheek, and widowhood struck him as the most pathetic and attractive aspect under which he had ever considered woman. He determined for one hour at least to make her forget her unprotected condition.

He endeavored first to propititate the maternal affections.

"You have a fine little boy, madam."

The lady smiled. "*She* is a very good baby."

Mr. Ward was momentarily confused. "Your little daughter resembles you strikingly," he remarked.

Again the rarely sweet smile flickered across the lady's lips.

"You could not compliment me in a more gratifying manner," she replied.

He turned to the baby, and endeavored to interest it in an exhibition of his watch and seals.

"What is her name?" he asked, hoping that the reply might involve that of the mother.

"We call her Dimple. Don't you think a baby the most delicious thing in the whole world?"

"Well, no, it had never occurred to me in that light before; but you know I have not had the advantage of an acquaintance with Miss Dimple."

"You could not help liking her. She never cries; she is absolutely angelic."

Mr. Ward was on the point of remarking, "I said she resembled you," but he checked himself; they were not sufficiently intimate *yet* for flattery.

The conversation became impersonal, and drifted through a wide range of subjects, Mr. Templeton Ward becoming more and more interested in his travelling companion, and quite ignoring the presence of the baby. This young person at last became fidgety and even cross.

"The precious infant!" exclaimed the lady. "How forgetful I am! She should have been fed twenty minutes ago."

A basket was produced, and a little rummaging brought to light a nursing bottle. "Dear! dear!" murmured

the baby's guardian: "here is the bottle, but where is the milk? How stupid in Maggie to forget it!"

The baby at the sight of the bottle at first chirruped with gleeful excitement, then became frantically impatient, and finally burst into a roar of anger as the train paused at an out-of-the-way country station.

"I see farm houses, and cows grazing in the pastures," suggested Mr. Ward; "perhaps I can obtain some milk for you."

"Oh, no, no; pray do not trouble yourself," replied the lady; "if you will kindly watch baby, I can get it." And before he had time to insist, she was out of the car and running toward one of the farm-houses. Mr. Ward explained the situation to the conductor, who agreed to wait two minutes beyond the usual time for her return. Two minutes, three minutes, four minutes passed, and still she came not.

The engineer sounded the whistle, the conductor shouted: "All aboard! I can't wait any longer. She's had plenty of time. I must reach the next station before the up-train," he explained, and the train moved on. Mr. J. Templeton Ward gazed in a stupefied manner from the window; the baby howled. "Come, this will never do," he said, as he endeavored simultaneously to realize the situation and to quiet the distracting baby, his thoughts and words keeping up a running fugue somewhat in this manner:

Thought: "What can have detained her?"

Aloud: "Precious little Dimple, so—"

Thought: "Where did she disappear to, anyway?"

Aloud: "—it was. She shall have the pretty watch."

Thought: "Great Cæsar! Can it be—"

Aloud: "Angelic little cherub!"

Thought: "—a case of desertion?"

Aloud: "Never cries—no, never."

Thought: "Of course not. She was a perfect lady, impossible."

Aloud: "Shut up this minute, or I'll—"

Thought: "What shall I do with the consumed—"

Aloud: "—speak to you like a father."

Thought: "—thing when I get to the city?"

Aloud (*to old lady who offers a peppermint*): "Thank you, ma'am." (*To baby*): "There, choke your blessed throat!"

Thought: "What a figure I'll cut at the depot!"

Aloud (*Attempting to sing*): "Oh, where shall rest be found?" "Byelo, byelo" (*shaking child violently*); "go to sleepy."

Thought: "Suppose Rose should be at the station with Winifred to meet me!"

Aloud: "Darling popsy wopsy chickabiddy chum! See how funny it looks in big man's hat!" (*Extinguishes baby in his light-colored high hat.*)

Thought: "She said a baby was the most delightful thing in the whole world. Any woman who can lie like that is capable of deserting her unprotected offspring."

Aloud (*removing the hat*): "Good gracious! It's black in the face; it's going into convulsions!"

Thought: "I'd like to know what everybody is laughing at. If I had a pistol I'd shoot somebody."

Aloud: "Look here, now, Miss Dimpsy Impsy. Come, let us reason together. This thing has got to be stopped. Be calm—I say be calm."

Thought: "I'll leave it in the seat, take my baggage and put for the smoking car." (*Suits the action to the idea. Settles himself comfortably. Newsboy appears almost immediately with the baby, still screaming.*)

Newsboy: "Please, sir, you left part of your baggage." (*Train comes to a stop in New York dépôt.*)

Thought: "There's a policeman. I'll hand the wretch over to him, and get him to carry it to the station-house or the foundling hospital."

A few minutes later and Mr. J. Templeton Ward gayly mounted the steps of his brother-in-law's brownstone mansion. A great incubus had been removed from his mind, and he now felt disposed to treat the adventure with hilarity. His sister met him most cordially, and throwing himself upon the sofa by her side, he related the story, decorated with considerable imaginative embroidery.

"Think, Rose," he said, solemnly, "what a tremendous escape! There I was a complete victim. Why, I actually took her for a respectable and fascinating little widow, and was flirting with her in the most confiding manner."

"Do you really think she meant to desert the baby?" asked Mrs. Molineux.

"Oh, without doubt. She had got herself up nicely

on purpose to deceive; and to think that I did not suspect her designs when she asked me if I did not think that execrable baby delicious!"

"Was the baby pretty, Templeton?"

"Pretty! I should think not. I wish you could have seen it. It bore the marks of depravity stamped upon its brow. When it howled, it glared at me with demoniac eyes, and fisted like a prize-fighter. I am morally certain that its father is one of the champions of the ring."

"And what did you say you did with it, dear?"

"I got rid of it as quickly as possible, I assure you. I handed it to a policeman, and requested him to drop it into the East River. I had the satisfaction, however, of pinching it well before I saw the last of it."

"Do you suppose the man thought you were in earnest, Templeton?"

"Of course not. He has carted it off to the Home for the Friendless, or the Asylum for Little Wanderers, or some institution of that sort, I suppose. But let's drop the baby. Where's Winifred?"

"I expect her every moment. There's the door-bell now. Let me see."

Mrs. Molineux motioned back the servant, and herself opened the hall door, finding herself, to her surprise, face to face with her husband, who wore an anxious expression. Mr. Ward, who sat just within the parlor, heard their conversation distinctly.

Rose. "Why, Henry, what's the matter?"

Mr. M. "Nothing. Don't be alarmed; only a telegram from Winifred. She was left, and will come on the next train."

Rose. "Oh! is that all? Then she ought to be here now: the trains run every hour."

Mr. M. "Winifred's all right, but—I don't want to alarm you. Be calm—"

Rose. "The baby! is she sick?"

Mr. M. "Don't get excited. The baby is not sick."

Rose (desperately). "Is she dead?"

Mr. M. "No, no. You always imagine the very worst that can happen. She is only lost."

A piercing shriek followed, and Mr. Ward sprang into the hall just in time to see his sister faint in the arms of her husband. They carried her into the par-

lor, and she was at once surrounded by frightened domestics. In the confusion that followed, Winifred Molineux arrived. There was no time for introductions, and indeed none were needed, for Mr. Ward, to his utter dismay, recognized his companion of the train, the supposed mother of the baby.

"I was bringing Dimple home from a visit to her grandmother," she explained, and added: "Is it possible that you are Mr. J. Templeton Ward? Then the baby is safe."

Mrs. Molineux opened her eyes, and suddenly sitting bolt-upright, assumed a tragic attitude. "Winifred," she demanded, "why did you abandon my precious Dimple?"

"I left her to get some milk," Winifred replied, good humoredly, "and as I was coming out of the dairy a horrid goat barred my passage. The woman drove him away, but he stopped me again at the pasture bars, and I did not reach the station until the train had left."

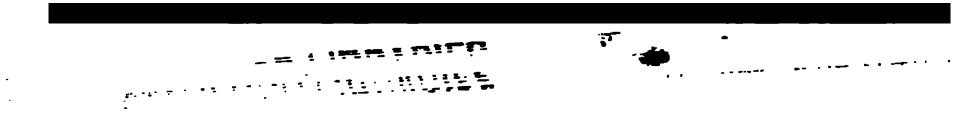
Mrs. Molineux laughed hysterically. "Jonathan Templeton Ward," she exclaimed, "what have you done with your sister's child?"

"How was I to know it was yours?" he asked, deprecatingly. "I had forgotten that Miss Winifred would be in mourning for her uncle, and I thought she was a widow."

"You thought!" interrupted his sister. "The least said about that, the better. He sent his niece to the foundling hospital; he insulted Winifred and all of us in a manner not to be repeated. Oh, my precious Dimple, my lovely pet! He told the policeman to drop her into the East River. Henry, he said you were a prize-fighter. Winifred, he is not worthy of your slightest thought. Why do you stand there staring at me in that idiotic manner, Jonathan? I disown you; you are not worthy to be the uncle of that cherub darling."

Mr. J. Templeton Ward did not wait to hear all. He darted out of the door, murmuring to himself, "A crisis comes once in the affairs of every man;" and seeking the policeman with frantic haste, Miss Dimple was in a few hours returned to the bosom of her fam-

ily. His sister, however, refused to see him, and it was not until the marriage of Miss Winifred Molineux to an officer in the United States navy that Mr. J. Templeton Ward finally made his peace with his outraged relatives.



MEG.

BY

JULIA C. R. DORR.

Very truly yours
Julia A. R. Dorr

JULIA C. R. DORR.

MRS. DORR, whose maiden name was Julia Caroline Ripley, was born at Charleston, S. C., February 13, 1825. She is descended, on her father's side, from Governor William Bradford of the Mayflower Company, and on her mother's from a French family, who resided on the Island of San Domingo until driven away by the insurrection, when they went to Charleston. Mrs. Dorr spent but two years of her life in South Carolina, and her home thereafter was Vermont, her father's native State. The motherless girl was carefully educated by her father, whose library was the schoolroom in which she did her studying and reading. When she was married to Seneca M. Dorr, then of New York, but for the last twenty years of Vermont, she was a very thoroughly cultivated young woman.

Her first published poem was sent by her husband, without her knowledge, to the *Union Magazine*, then edited by Mrs. Kirkland. It was accepted, and she then wrote a story which she offered for one of the ten $100 prizes offered by *Sartain's Magazine* for the ten best stories. She was of the successful competitors, the list including Edward Everett Hale and Henry Herbert ("Frank Forrester"). In 1847 she published her first novel, "Farmingdale," under the *nom de plume* of "Carolina Thomas." Two years later "Landmere" was published under her own name.

The care and training of her children (three sons and a daughter) left her no leisure for novel writing for a number of years, but poems from her pen appeared from time to time, and since 1869 she has written several volumes. Her literary work has formed but a small part of a life full of manifold activities. She herself says:—"My literary work has always been subordinate; the smallest part of my life. It has merely been a kind of overflow."

At her handsome home—"The Maples" at Rutland, Vermont, she constantly dispenses an ample hospitality, and in all social and charitable work she is a power for good. She is president of "The Fortnightly Club," which has a membership of one hundred and fifty; and of a purely literary society called "Friends in Council." Beside the labor entailed by these two offices Mrs. Dorr has the oversight of the Public Library of Rutland, to the establishment of which she gave all her copyrights for a year or two.

Mr. Dorr, who was for many years conspicuous in public life, died four years ago, and since that time she has written comparatively little. The zest has gone out of her pen work as out of her life since she lost her husband, who was lover, friend, comrade and critic, all in one. Her children are grown up and widely scattered, but she is not alone. Friends cluster about her, and her harmonious and gracious life, full of kindly impulses and activities, has its reward in the gratitude and affection of those among whom she has always lived. Mrs. Dorr is one of the best beloved of American poets and novelists.

MEG.

MARGARET NEALE, a girl of twenty or thereabouts, sat on a low broad stone near the edge of a cliff that overhung the sea. Her features were irregular, but she had a certain dark gypsy-like beauty of her own. Her brown stuff gown clung closely about her; her hat had fallen back and hung carelessly by the strings; a red woolen shawl was wrapped around her shoulders, one end trailing off over the scant, gray herbage. Her hands were clasped about her knees; there was a hard set look about the unsmiling mouth; and the eyes that were sometimes most tender, had a dangerous light in them as they gazed steadfastly off over the darkening sea to the distant horizon still red with the reflected glow of the sunset.

At a little distance, but with his back towards her, and his steel-blue eyes just as steadfastly bent in the opposite direction, stood Matthew Erickson, a handsome young fellow enough, in the rough dress of a miner, tall, strong and ruddy, with a full curling, chestnut beard, and hair of the same rich color. A blue ribbon dangled from his left hand.

There had evidently been a quarrel; and a love quarrel in a straggling mining hamlet on the northwest coast of England, does not differ greatly from one in a scattered fishing hamlet on the eastern coast of Maine. Forms of speech may differ; but love and anger are much the same the wide world over. As for the queer, quaint, dialect in which this especial pair of lovers poured forth their mutual grievances, no attempt will be made to reproduce it here. You may be sure they said "yo" for "you," and "towd" for "told," and "canna" for "cannot," and "ta" for "thou." But all that shall be taken for granted—if not for your ease and comfort, at least for mine!

Tired of the silence at length the young miner

sauntered away with an air of assumed indifference, and picking up a handful of pebbles slowly tossed them one by one, into the waves below. Margaret's eyes did not waver, but none the less did she follow every motion of his hand. Having watched the fall of his last pebble he came back and stood behind her, winding the ribbon round his finger to its evident detriment.

"So you will not wear it, Meg?" he said at last.

"No, I will not," she answered without turning her head. "Why do you vex me? There's no more to be said about it."

"But why, Meg?" and he laid his hand on her shoulder as with an attempt at conciliation. "Tell me why? Surely you can do no less."

"Because—because—I can't abide blue, Matt Erickson. It's hateful to me."

"But *I* like it, Meg! and if you cared for me you would be glad to wear a blue ribbon to the fair when I ask it."

"Why did you buy it?" she asked shortly, turning towards him by a hair's breadth. "Not to please me, that's sure!"

"Yes: to please you, and to please myself. Jenny wears ribbons as blue as her own eyes, and I am sure you cannot say they are not pretty. You are just stubborn, Meg."

Poor Matt! In his uneducated masculine blindness he could not see that the delicate color that harmonized so well with his pretty cousin's pink-and-white cheeks and sunny curls, was utterly unsuited to his brown Meg, who needed rich, dark hues and warm reds to brighten her somewhat swarthy complexion.

And poor Meg! She had an instinctive sense of fitness that taught her this, but she was not wise enough to know how to explain it to her somewhat imperious lover. She could only say she "hated blue!"

Besides, Meg had carried a sore spot in her heart for two months; ever since this same cousin Jenny of Matt's came on a visit to Rysdyk. She was a dimpled, delicate little creature from the south—from near London in fact—where, as Meg was very certain, everything was nicer and finer than in Lancashire.

Jenny's hands were soft and white, and she had pretty gowns as befitted the daughter of a well-to-do farmer who kept men-servants and maid-servants. And she had a pair of real gold ear-rings and a lace scarf! Old Mother Marley said it was real lace, but of that Meg was not quite sure. That was a height of magnificence to which she was not certain even Jenny could attain. And Jenny had sweet little coaxing ways with her, and she was always purring round her Cousin Matt, like a kitten; and—and—*she* wore blue ribbons! Meg would none of them.

She sat for a moment as if turned to stone. Then she blazed out,

"'Jenny!' 'Jenny!' I am tired of 'Jenny'! She has turned your head with her flirting ways like a butterfly, and her yellow hair and her finery. Give your blue ribbon to her and take her to the fair—for I'll not wear it!"

"And you'll not go to the fair either?" said Matt, in tones of suppressed passion. "Is that what you mean?"

I'll not go with you," she answered, growing cool herself as he grew angry. "Yet it's likely enough that I may go. There are plenty of lads who would be glad to take me with no ribbons at all."

With a strong effort the young man put the curb upon his tongue, but his face darkened. You will go with me or with no one, Meg," he said. "This is all nonsense—and we to be married next Michaelmas! But come," and he put out his hand to raise her from the stone, "it grows dark."

Meg, still angry, but willing to be pacified if she must, allowed him to assist her, and stood beside her stalwart lover with burning cheeks and downcast eyes. She rather liked, on the whole, his tacit refusal to defend himself and his masterful way of telling her it was "all nonsense." But just at this moment, as ill luck would have it, a small brown paper parcel dropped from the folds of her shawl. Matt stooped to pick it up. It burst open, and a yard or two of scarlet ribbon rippled over his fingers.

Now our poor Meg, not to be outdone by the fair Jenny, had bought this ribbon herself that very evening, meaning to wear it to the fair next week. But it

so happened that when Matt went to Mother Marley's shop to buy his own blue love-token, he had found Dan Willis there—the only man in Rysdyk whose rivalship he had ever feared. And Dan was buying a ribbon precisely like this. Mother Marley had wrapped it in this very piece of paper Matt was sure, and he had seen Dan put it in his pocket and walk off with it.

And now, here it was! His gift was spurned then and his rival's accepted; and all Meg's talk about Jenny was a mere subterfuge—an excuse for a quarrel.

It was easy to see, now, why she had been so irritable of late, and so prone to take offence. But a man could not stand everything, and if Meg preferred Dan Willis to him, why so be it.

Yet if she would not wear his love-token she certainly should not wear Dan's. He hardly meant to do it; he was sorry the next minute. But what he did, as the tide of passion swept him off his feet for an instant, was to wind the two ribbons into a knot and throw them vehemently into the sea.

"There!" he cried, "that's settled once for all."

"And something else is settled, too, Matt Erickson," retorted Meg, in a white heat. "There will be no marriage for us next Michaelmas, no marriage then or ever! You would strike me some day, for aught I know, if I should choose to wear a red knot rather than a blue. I'll not run the risk. I'll have nothing more to say to you while the stars shine," and darting round the cliff, she was half way down to the beach before he ever thought of stopping her.

The next day Erickson, magnanimous, great-hearted fellow that he was, after all, having gotten over his pet began to look at their quarrel from Meg's standpoint. It occurred to him that he might have drawn uncalled for inferences. Dan Willis might have a dozen sweethearts who all liked red ribbons for aught he knew. And how like a fool he had behaved, losing his temper like a hot-headed boy, and throwing Meg's poor little trinkets over the cliff. No wonder she was afraid to trust him. More than one husband in Rysdyk was in the habit of beating his wife on as slight provocation as the hue of a ribbon; and it was not strange that a

high-spirited girl like Meg should decline to run the risk after she had once seen him in a fury.

As for Jenny—she had come in between him and Meg. He could see it now. But she was going home the day after the fair, and he would see Meg that very night and tell her so. For he did not dream that all was indeed over between them. He could hardly wait for the hour to leave the mine.

He changed his soiled clothes, ate his supper hurriedly and was soon on his way to Meg, stopping as he went to buy another ribbon—red, this time, and broader and richer and handsomer than the one he had robbed her of.

Then he went on through the crooked, scattered little village, till he reached the Widow Neale's cottage just on the outskirts.

To his surprise he found the door locked and the shutters closed. As he stood still in his perplexity, a white headed urchin who was turning somersaults near by shouted "Ho you, Matt Erickson! It's no good to wait there. The widow and Meg have gone away."

"Gone? Where?"

"Don't know. To France, like enough—or to Ameriky—or to London—or somewheres. They took a big box and a bundle and they don't know but they'll stay forever'n ever. Meg said so;" and making a rotating wheel of himself the lad vanished round the corner.

Just then the door of the nearest cottage opened and a woman's face looked out. It was growing dark.

"Is it you, Erickson? There's no one at home in the house there. But I have something here I was to give you when you came this way."

His face was stern and set and white in the fading light, as he took the little packet from the woman's hand.

"Where have they gone?" was all he said.

"I don't just know. To visit some of their kinfolk a great way off," the widow said. "Oh! but she's a close-mouthed one, she is—and Meg's a bit like her. They 're not gossipy folk. You never get much out of them," she added with an injured air. "Not but I 've found them good neighbors enough; but they 're rather high and mighty for commoners."

As soon as he was out of sight Matthew Erickson opened the packet. He knew what was in it before he untied the knot. A string of curiously carved beads with a strange, foreign, spicy odor, that he had bought of a wandering sailor and fastened round Meg's neck one happy night; and two or three other trifles he had given her. And he found this note, slowly and painfully written, badly spelled perhaps, and not punctuated at all. But what of that? The meaning was plain enough; all too plain Matt thought, as he drew his hand across his eyes as if to clear his vision.

"I gave you back your troth last night. Here are the beads, and the silver piece, and the heron feathers. Now all is over between us." Here she had evidently hesitated a moment, wondering if her words were strong enough. For on the line below she had written, as with an echo from the prayer-book reverberating in her ears.

"Forever and ever, amen. Margaret Neale."

Not Meg, his Meg, his proud, high-spirited sweetheart—but Margaret—Margaret Neale! It set her at such an immeasurable distance from him. "All is over between us." As if she were dead, and buried out of his sight. And he had spoken to James Ray about the snug cottage beyond the bay; and they were to have been married at Michaelmas!

He knew enough of the Widow Neale's habits to ask no more questions of the neighbors. As one of them had said, she was close-mouthed. He knew she had a sister living in Scotland for whom Meg was named; but where even he did not know. Scotland was like a distant, foreign land to the people in Rysdyk. But the widow had money enough to go to Scotland or farther if she wished, even on such short notice. She had never worked in the mines, neither had Meg. She had a comfortable annuity, left her by her old mistress; for she had served in a great family before she married John Neale.

Month after month passed. Michaelmas was over, the winter came and went, and Rysdyk knew no more of her or of Meg than when they left. The silence, the void, grew unendurable to Matt. With the early spring he carried into effect what had been the one

dream of his life before he learned to love Meg. America was the land of promise for miners as well as others; and had he not a friend who worked in the great iron mines at Ishpeming, on the shores of the wonderful northern lake that was itself almost as large as all England? He had no father or mother, only a half uncle whose house had been the only home he had ever known.

What better could he do than to seek work and forgetfulness together, where there would be nothing to remind him of the past.

So, when one fine morning nearly a year after her sudden flitting, the neighbors awoke to find the door of Widow Neale's cottage ajar and the shutters open, and the first bit of news Meg heard was that Matt Erickson had gone to America.

It struck her like a blow Now indeed he had dropped out of her life, as utterly as months since she had dropped out of his. For she, too, had had time to repent. Almost before the blue hills of Scotland had dawned upon her sight she had repented in dust and ashes. How foolish she had been, like a child who throws away its bread in a pet and goes to bed hungry. Why had she not worn the blue ribbon to please her lover even if she did not like it? As for Jenny—but what nonsense was that! she would have been ashamed of Matt if he had not been kind to her.

To be sure he had been cross and had thrown away her ribbon. But then he was a man—and men were strong and masterful and could not bear contradiction, and she had angered him by her foolish persistence.

Ah! if she could but undo it all and have her tall, brave, handsome lover back again.

She would have turned round and gone back to Rysdyk the very next day if she could have had her way. But a journey was a journey to people of their rank and condition, and her mother, who had taken it to please her and somewhat against her own will, was not to be blown about like a feather by her caprices. She had suspected a love-quarrel was at the bottom of Meg's sudden and impetuous desire to go immediately on a visit to her Aunt Margaret in Kilmar-

nock. But once being there the old lady was determined to have "the worth of her money" before she went back. She could not afford to go jaunting round the country, she said, as if she were the queen herself with all parliament at her back. When she had had her visit out she would go home, and not before. Meg was a good girl, but she was a bit hot-tempered. This lesson would do her good.

But why, do you ask, did not Meg write to her lover, if she felt she had been in the wrong? Ah, why do not wiser ones than she always do the best thing, the right thing? Besides, she was a woman, and a proud one. After having discarded her lover she would not forthwith fall at his feet and ask him to marry her. But, ah! she thought, as the long, slow days wore on, if she were only with him again, if she could but look upon his face once more, he would know all without the telling.

There was another reason. Writing was a hard and unaccustomed task. She could not talk with her pen. Sometime, if the good God would let her see Matt face to face, she might be able to explain. But she could not write.

And now, after all the months of waiting, she was back in Rysdyk, but he—he was in America.

It was as if he had gone out of the world. One day she went to the rectory and asked Miss Agnes to let her look at a map of America. The young lady did so, and showed her England, also, and the wide waste of waters that lay between the two. What a speck England was, to be sure! Then she asked to be shown Lake Superior, and Miss Agnes pointed it out, wonderingly. How far it was! As far from the seaboard, almost, as the width of the Atlantic itself.

She turned away with a long, shuddering sigh. Hope was dead within her. Matthew Erickson had gone out of her little world into another of which she knew nothing. He would have been nearer if he had been dead.

Once in a while, as the years went on, at rare intervals news of him came back to Rysdyk. He was well; he had fair wages, though gold was not to be had for the gathering in America any more than in England;

he had been promoted and had charge of a gang of men. At length there was a long interval of silence. Then came floating rumors of ill; then after a while a letter in a strange handwriting, a letter to his uncle, who had died three weeks before it came. There had been a bad accident in the mines—an explosion; and in the effort to save others Matthew Erickson had himself received dangerous injuries. No one thought he could live. But now, after months, he was slowly recovering, if recovery it could be called, for he was blind. The poisonous vapors had destroyed his sight.

It was five years since he went away—five years that had brought many changes to Meg. It was a sobered, thoughtful woman, not a hot-tempered girl, who knelt by the Widow Neale's side a week after the letter came and said:

"Mother, have I been a good, faithful child to you these many years?" Her mother looked at her wonderingly. Two quiet women living alone, they were not in the habit of being over demonstrative.

"A good child? Why do you ask that, Meg? There's not a better in all Lancashire!"

"Have I ever vexed you or given you sorrow? Tell me, mother."

"No," said the Widow Neale, slowly. "Only—it vexes me that you will not marry. An old maid's no good, and you know that two of the best men in Rysdyk worship the very ground you tread on this day. I call no names and I say nothing. A woman must answer for herself. But I wish you were married, Meg. I've saved up a good penny for your dowry; you know that."

"Yes," she said, her lips quivering.

"Whatever was the reason you did not have Matt Erickson?" her mother went on querulously. "You'd have been a proud wife now, and he here, hale and hearty."

With a quick gasp Meg threw up both arms, and than buried her face in her mother's lap, sobbing vehemently while the latter sat aghast, half frightened at the storm she had unwittingly raised. At last she touched her daughter's hair softly.

"Don't, Meg," she said. "I did not mean it."

But Meg only drew the wrinkled hands about her neck and let her tears flow unchecked. At length she looked up.

"It was I who drove him away—Matt Erickson," she said. "We had a little quarrel, just a few idle words about a ribbon, and I told him in my silly anger I would have no more to say to him while the stars shone. And now they do not shine for him for he is blind—blind. O mother, I cannot live, I cannot bear it!"

"Yes, you will live, child," the widow answered quickly. "We can bear anything, we women. Your father was brought in to me dead—killed in these mines when you were scarce three years old, my Meg, and I am alive yet."

"But this is worse than death," she cried passionately. "Mother, do you hear? He who was my plighted husband is blind, in a far, strange country. I must go and bring him home, home to Rysdyk."

She had risen from her mother's arms, and stood before her in the moonlight, pale, resolute, with her hands clasped rigidly. "Give me my dowry, mother, and let me go," she said. "Do not deny me this thing. I am well and strong and, if I do say it, I am quickwitted I can make my way. I shall come back safely. Let me go, mother!"

"It is not your place, Meg. Let some one else go."

"Who? Tell me that! Has he father or brother or uncle? Who is there to go?"

"But—its not right maidenly to go off after a lover, Meg. What will the folks say? And—would you marry a blind man?"

"Maidenly? It is maidenly to do right," said Meg sturdily, her brown cheek flushing. "What do I care for the folk? I'm not a young girl to drop my eyes and be shamefaced because folk will *talk*. They always talk. And as for marrying—it is not of marriage I am thinking now; it is of bringing Matt Erickson—he whom I drove away by my ill doings—back safe to his own country—"

She hesitated a moment and then went on: "But I'll not play false with you, mother. He'll not ask me to marry him. But I shall know. If he wants me,

after all that's past, he shall have me, and I'll take care of him till I die."

Their talk lasted far into the night. But with it we have no more to do, nor with the details by which a little money was to be made to go a great way. For, after many tears, the widow consented that Meg should take her dowry and spend it as she chose. If they had been more worldly-wise they would have known how to accomplish their purpose through the agency of others. As it was, they saw no other way than for Meg to do herself the thing she wanted done.

Oh, that weary, weary journey! Why was the world so wide, the way so long? Meg kept up a brave heart until the boisterous ocean was crossed, and she had made her way as far as Buffalo, where she had been told to take the steamer for Marquette. It seemed to her that she had travelled the width of the whole wide earth already, since her foot first fell upon the soil of the strange new world.

"Is this Lake Superior, sir," she asked timidly of a policeman, as she left the cars and saw the waters of Lake Erie stretching away in the distance. "And can you tell me, are we near Ishpeming?

"Oh, no, my girl, this is Erie. Lake Superior is way up north, hundreds of miles from here. Ishpeming? Never heard of such a place. But here's your steamer if you're going up that way."

Her heart sank like lead. Would she ever, ever reach the end? All day and day after day she sat silently in the bow of the boat, gazing steadily forward. On, on, till Erie was passed,—on through lovely St. Clair with its softly rounded shores and fairy islands, —then up through Lake Huron, still struggling up, as it were, past towering, frowning heights, past stretches of interminable forest, past rocky headlands, past sandy beaches, through tortuous channels and devious ways, into the wild rapids of the Sault St. Marie. Then at last Superior! grand, weird, majestic in its awful silences, sweeping on between its mighty, far-stretching shores, dark as the ocean, resistless as the grave.

Where was she going? Would she ever find Matt? Sailing on and on—penetrating nature's secret places where the foot of man had never trodden. So it seemed to her. Could human kind live in these vast, wild wildernesses?

It was like a new birth when after many days the steamer entered the beautiful bay of Marquette, and the fair young city rose before her astonished eyes, its white cliffs gleaming in the sun, its green shores sweeping downward to the water's edge. She was near her goal at last.

For Ishpeming was but twenty miles away up the railroad, and thither she went by the first train. How rough and wild it all was! And how the charred and blackened pine trees towered aloft like grim giants, and pointed their ghastly fingers at her as she swept through their solitudes!

"Can you tell me where to find a man called Matthew Erickson?" she asked of the depot-master, trembling from head to foot.

"Erickson? Erickson? Blown up in the mines a year or so ago wasn't he? He stays at Sam Ayres, the Englishman's, I believe. Just yer go round that corner, ma'am, then turn to the right and go up the hill—or stay? Let me lock up here and I'll go with you. Ever been in Ishpeming before? No? I thought you looked like a stranger in these parts."

He left her at Sam Ayres' gate, having opened it gallantly when he saw that her cold fingers were unfit to do her bidding. A kindly-faced woman came to the door and bade her welcome.

Meg's story was soon told.

"And you have come alone all this long way to take Erickson home again?" her eyes filling. "God bless you, dear, for I'm sure He sent you. We've done the best we could for him, but—you are his sister?"

"No. I'm a friend—a neighbor. There was no one else," she said simply.

"What's your name? I'll tell him."

"No matter about the name; say a friend from the old country."

The woman came back presently,

"Be careful," she said, "he's weak yet. But I want to tell you something just to keep your heart up, for he looks like a ghost. There was a great doctor from New York up here last week to look at his poor eyes, and he told Sam there was a chance for him yet—just one chance in a hundred."

"Does he know it?" asked Meg, tremulously, her

color coming and going. She was but a woman after all. Only blindness would have brought her there.

"No, and you must not tell him. The doctor said so most particular. Will you go up now?"

He had been sitting in the sun by the low window all day, brooding, brooding. They had been very kind to him, these people, but even kindness wears itself out after awhile. What was to become of him? The wages he had laid up were wasting away. The early northern winter would soon set in. He shivered as he thought of the fierce winds, the pitiless, drifting snows. There was nothing a blind man could do here. If he were only at home in Rysdyk! Would Meg be sorry for him, he wondered, if she knew how desolate he was, how lonely in this strange land? If he were at home he could learn to weave baskets like old Timothy. Here he was just a dead weight.

Some one to see him from the old country?

He turned his sightless eyes towards the door where Meg was entering noiseless as a spirit, and his face kindled eagerly. Noiselessly she closed the door behind her. He was so changed, so white and worn, that her own heart stopped its pulsations for a moment. She feared any sudden shock might overcome him. She dared not speak lest he should know her voice. Strange that she had not thought of this before!

He put out his hand vaguely, feeling the presence that he could not see.

"You are very welcome," he said. "But I do not know who it is. Who are you?"

He thought it was some kindly Englishman, who having heard of his misfortunes had come to speak a word of cheer and comfort.

She gave him her hand, still silently. A woman's hand! A swift thrill shot through his frame, and his face flushed. Holding herself still with a mighty effort, Meg knelt by his side, laying her head upon his knee.

His hand touched her hair, her forehead, her lips. She gave a low cry, trembling like a leaf.

"Speak to me, quick," he whispered hoarsely.

"Matt!"

"O Meg, Meg, my Meg!"

A CONFEDERATE IDYL.

BY

MARION HARLAND.

truly yours,

Mary Virginia Tuhume,

MARION HARLAND.

MRS. MARY VIRGINIA TERHUNE, better known to the reading public as "Marion Harland," has been for the last three years, 1885–1888, a resident of Brooklyn, N. Y., her husband, the Rev. Dr. Terhune, being pastor of the Bedford Avenue Reformed Church of that city; previous to which time the family had resided for many years in Newark, N. J., where the Doctor was settled over a large prosperous church. Mrs. Terhune is a lady who admirably exemplifies the value of system in her literary work and daily life; and she has also discovered the secret, unknown to so many Americans, how to accomplish a large quantity of work, literary, social, and religious without hurry, or nervous excitement.

In 1854, the New York publisher, Mr. Derby, tells us, a gentleman came to him with a new novel entitled "Alone." This was Mr. Samuel P. Hawes, the father of Mrs. Terhune. This book had already been printed in Richmond, Virginia, but to be printed then at that time, could scarcely be considered as "published." This proved much more of a success than Mr. Derby anticipated, more than 100,000 copies of the English edition having been sold; and it was afterwards translated into German for the famous house of Tauchnitz at Leipzig. But this was not her first literary work: at the early age of fourteen she had contributed, under an assumed name, to a local newspaper, and at sixteen furnished the sketch called "Marrying for Prudential Motives," for Godey's "Lady's Book."

Mrs. Terhune has written much and well on household topics, and other suggestive semi-ethical works in the form of fiction which could hardly fail to exert a wholesome influence on young girls for whom they are mostly adapted. Of the many which she has written "Eve's Daughters" has proved the most popular.

The rest of this class is a long list; of them we name as coming next in interest, the "Hidden Path," "From My Youth Up," "Husbands and Homes," "True as Steel," and "Phemie's Temptation." Of the more directly practical works, "Common Sense in the Household" is perhaps the best and most comprehensive.

She edits a monthly magazine, *The Home-maker*, recently established in New York, and is a frequent contributor to newspaper syndicates. Mrs. Terhune varies her literary and social life with church work, ably assisting her husband in his pastoral duties and in instructing a Bible class of young man connected with the church. She is in the meridian of life, happily circumstanced, and surrounded by a family of grown up children.

A CONFEDERATE IDYL.

We had been "out" all day. The weather was soft for November, and so were the red clay roads. Our boots, worn outside of our trousers, were dyed half-way up the legs, and as stiff as mailed greaves. The trudge through the adhesive paste was so disagreeable that we avoided the highways when we could. Miles of tramping at the heels of the hounds over "old fields," of brown straw and wheat stubble, and wading in oozy swamps criss-crossed by bamboo briers, brought us to our quarters at nightfall, exhausted and ravenous, just as a leaden pour of rain began.

The house was vast and scantily furnished. The Richmond citizen who had bought the plantation at the close of the war, camped down, rather than lived on it, with his family in summer. For the rest of the year, the overseer and his wife occupied one wing leaving lofty halls and wide chambers to freezing damps and solitude.

We were there at the invitation of the proprietor's son. He stood at one corner of the hearth, leaning against the mantle, pipe in hand. We had supped upon York River oysters, wild turkey and partridges, after which we were served with Powhatan pipes and prime Richmond manufactured tobacco. Not a man of us would touch a cigar that week. The table was pushed to the back of the room; a mighty blaze, made lurid by lightwood knots, drew up the chimney with a roar like that of a steady nor'easter. The evening had begun auspiciously. Our bodies were warmed and rested, our hearts mellowed by good cheer and jolly fellowship. For the rest, we had found for ourselves by now what it meant to be Rob Crutchfield's guests.

A slight, well-built man of thirty-eight or forty, but looking at least five years younger, he was to the three New Yorkers of the hunting party an object of

especial attention and interest. During the civil war he was a scout, famous in both armies for his daring and success, his risks and deliverances, his dashing exploits, the coolness that never failed him in the face of sudden death, and his generosity, his mad frolics, had been the boast of many a camp-fire tale and post-bellum experience meeting. A saber-gash in the edge of the hair above his forehead, and a scarcely perceptible halt upon the right thigh as he walked, were visible mementos of hair-breadth escapes, "Rebellion keepsakes" he called them. In demeanor he was quietly courteous, talking easily and somewhat slowly, with a downward inflection on the closing words of the sentence, characteristic and pleasing when we became accustomed to it, but which would have been a drawl in an illiterate speaker. He had the mellow voice of the Southerner; accent and intonation were Virginian, as were certain provincial tricks of expression, that protracted residence in higher latitudes would have corrected or modified. His smile was singularly pleasant, lending kindly or humorous gleams to deep-set gray eyes, and showing a line of white teeth under the drooping moustache.

In a crowd he would be overlooked. With our knowledge of his antecedents, we found him a fascinating study, even before he was beguiled—ingeniously, for his modesty was proverbial—into the relation of personal adventures.

Of the four Virginians present, three had served through the war. Two of the Northerners had seen service. To-night the desultory after-supper chat settled down after a while, upon the relation and discussion of incidents of the national storm, that had blown itself out into the tired sobbings of the vanquished, the dignified calm of the victor, fifteen years before. It was by such gradual approaches that Rob Crutchfield was drawn on to tell the longest story he had yet given us:—

"If my memory serves me correctly, it was the 14th or 15th of December, '63, when I was making my way back to camp after three days 'out.' The other side had had the best of it that year, and was beginning to knot together, length by length, the string of fortifications meant to strangle Richmond. Inside of this [illegible]e was stretched ours. I thought, sometimes, when

I got far enough outside, and high enough up to look down upon the two,—in the top of a pine tree, on a high hill, for example—that the Rebel camps were like the ring we children used to make around the chicken to keep off the old woman, in the game of 'Chicken-me-chicken-me-crany-crow,'—hands joined all around and faces towards the enemy. I was not in a fanciful mood that day, however; I had been sent out to get certain information as to one camp in particular, and I hadn't got it. A division had gone into winter quarters in exactly the most inconvenient position (for us) they could have selected. A mile further to the east, west, north or south, and the settlement would have been no more to us than a dozen others. If one of you gentlemen had to sleep in a fourth-story room, you wouldn't think comfortably of night alarms of fire after you had heard the key turned on the outside of your door, you might not care to leave the chamber before morning, but in case you should!—That camp was our locked door, and from general down to sutler we regarded it as the ugliest wart on the face of the earth. As Dogberry says, 'It was tolerable and not to be endured.' Every man of us felt that if there was such a thing as bursting that door off the hinges, he'd like to have a run at it.

"I had hung about the skirts of the encampment three days and nights. Fortunately, the weather was very mild. Two nights I slept in tobacco barns, the third under a fodder-stack, rolled up in a Federal military overcoat."

"The one you wore on the nor'ard side of the big rock?" asked an auditor, quizzingly.

Crutchfield's eyes twinkled.

"The same. That was at Chancellorsville,—I was caught between the two lines. There was an immense boulder with a fringe of sassafras and chinquapin bushes growing around the base. I had slept among them over night, being on scouting duty at the time. The firing awoke me, and I could do nothing but lie low and keep dark until the rumpus was over. I had on gray pantaloons and hunting-shirt and this overcoat. Half the day I was on one side of the rock wrapped up in the blue cloak, out of compliment to the Feds; the other half on the opposite side in my shirt

and breeches, because the Rebs were having the best of it in that direction. It was the liveliest work I ever did in the way of shifting my political base. The business has become so common in Virginia since that I have given it up as low.

"The old coat was to serve me a better turn on this occasion. For half a mile beyond the outer pickets guarding the objectionable camp, the woods had been cut down, the tops falling upward. This was done before the leaves dropped, and they were now as dry and crackly as so many pieces of writing paper. I might as well have fired off a musket to give notice of my approach, as try to creep inside the lines through this *chevaux de frise.* I was lying on the ground, as cross as a bear, in a thicket of cedars close to the road, when I heard somebody whistling. It's a theory of mine that every man, however near akin to a fool, could do some one thing well if he would only give his mind to it. The weight of this man's intellect wouldn't have strained the back bone of a dragon fly, but he had devoted the best powers of it to one subject. He could whistle more sweetly and clearly, and could hold out at the task longer than any creature I ever heard attempt it—wild mocking-birds and trained bull-finches not excepted. I distinguished the air, in the dead stillness of the war-blasted country while he was an eighth of a mile off. It was the 'Blue Danube Waltz.'

"It may have been because I had eaten nothing that day but two hard-tack biscuits that I turned sick all over and seemed to hear the thud of my heart as it dropped suddenly and hit hard. The cedar bushes and the blue sky and the muddy road went clean away from me, and I was whirling around the ball-room at Cape May, the band playing the 'Blue Danube Waltz,' the sea booming and shining in the moonlight in the distance outside the windows, and Lucy Deane was my partner. Her dress was some sort of thin stuff that looked like cool, pale, purple mist. She had a bunch of heliotrope in her belt. I begged and got a piece of it that night when we said 'Good night' and 'Good bye.' All that was three years ago last August, when I was twenty-three and she twenty, and neither of us [redacted]med—much as we were given to dreaming—that

Lincoln *could* be elected, or that South Carolina *would* secede, or that the mouth of hell might gape between us before the Christmas I then hoped to spend in New York. Those were the minutes and such were the thoughts that made clean-mouthed men swear in those days.

"By the time I was cool and steady again the horseman reined up in the road not three yards from my cover. 'What's that over there?' he said, sharply.

"I was sure he had seen me through the cedars, but I had not scouted for two years not to learn to give myself the millionth part of a chance, if such existed, and I lay still. "'What, sir?' answered a voice I took to be that of an orderly. I dared not stir, but I knew both speakers were Yankees.

"'Those things that look like fruit on those trees.'

"'Persimmons, sir—a sort of winter plum that grows around here.'

"'Good to eat?'

"'When they'r ripe, sir—after three or four sharp frosts. Then they are real sweet and nice.'

"'Go over there and bring me a handful.'

"As the orderly lighted I twisted my head around softly. 'Over there' was a knoll some hundred and fifty yards from the main road, across a gully grown up with brushwood. The orderly would be out of sight for, maybe, two minutes while pushing through the bushes. Unless he turned, his back would be towards us for five. If we could get away unseen by him I might count on at least ten minutes start. In less than fifteen seconds I and my revolver were staring into the officer's face across the orderly's empty saddle.

"'If you speak or move you are a dead man!' was what I whispered, and the pistol silently emphasized.

"Any man would have been startled in the circumstances, even if his holsters hadn't been empty, as I had seen his *were*. Only a born coward would have been scared so far out of his senses as not to find them again under an hour. No corpse ever looked up at me out of a trench the day after a battle with a blanker gaze and whiter face than did my prisoner. His teeth chattered, and I could almost hear his knees and elbow-joints rattle. He collapsed into a loose bunch. I was afraid I should have to hold him on his horse. After

that spectacle, my course was clear, my mind perfectly easy. I kept my hand on his bridle for the first mile, which we took at a smart trot to get well out of the orderly's way. Then I brought both horses down to a walk, and took a good look at my prize. Anything more gorgeous in the way of a uniform I had never seen off a parrot's back. He was orange and blue from top to toe. An orange feather in a blue cocked hat; a blue body-coat slashed and faced with orange; orange stripes down blue breeches; orange lining cuffs and collar to his cape surtout. There were actually sallow streaks in his blue-white complexion.

"'If fine feathers make fine birds, I have captured the Yankee peacock of the walk!' thought I.

"But my military salute was given in good faith to the prisoner of war—not to his clothes.

"'We may as well understand one another, General,' said I. It is always safe on an uncertainty to rank a fellow well-up the line, and I was dazzled into a notion that I might have in tow the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army.

"'I am neither guerilla nor highway robber nor yet a deserter from the Federal Army, as you might suppose from my coat,' I went on to explain. 'I am a Confederate scout. You came from the camp on the hill over yonder, I suppose?'

"He nodded, still tongue tied.

"'Now, General,' I said, slowly, that he might take it all in; 'I mean to use you as my safe-conduct through that camp. I know just what my life is worth if I am caught inside your lines in this dress, just a trifle more than yours will be if you, by word, look or gesture give me up. Dead or alive, I am going through that camp. If you betray me I will make a run for life and liberty. I've been in narrower straits than that and got off scot-free. But—*I'll drop you first, certain!* I never miss my mark when I take aim in earnest. If you go quietly along with me I engage you shall receive no damage in life or limb. Now, I expect you to bear yourself like a man and an enlightened citizen of the United States, and make things comfortable all around!'

"The fellow's brain sailed awkwardly for the want of ballast, as I have intimated. But he had the

instincts of a gentleman, and acted up to his lights when these had the watch. He returned my salute, drew out his sword and offered it to me.

"'Keep it!' I said. 'I hope you'll live to draw it in a better cause than that which made you buckle it on.'

"By your leave, gentlemen,"—bowing to us—"I'll tell this story in the jargon of the 'unreconstructed.' That was the way we all talked—and felt—at that date. You wouldn't have respected us if we had turned our pipes a stop lower."

The trio of Northerners applauded re-assuringly.

"All right! Go ahead!" added one.

"That was what we did—the general and I. Half a a mile further on we espied a picket strolling leisurely from one tree-stump to another and basking in the sun.

"'What's your countersign?' asked I of my friend.

"For one second the thought that fright had driven it out of his head took my breath away. In the next he had caught at it.

"'Give it!' said I, as we reached the picket, and he minded me without an objection.

"We passed the inner line of posts in the same manner, and rode, side by side, into the heart of the camp, I on the general's right, the bridle in my left hand, the cape of the overcoat drawn forward over the right arm which was crossed on my chest. The right hand held the revolver. It covered him at half-cock all the time and my finger was on the trigger. It was a model encampment for neatness and order, military discipline of the best kind and sanitary provisions. Health, comfort, and quiet reigned supreme. But I made at least one valuable discovery, the force stationed there had been greatly over-estimated by us. The hut doors were folded back, the day being Spring-like, and nearly everybody was out of doors.

"When those we met and passed saluted my general—or his clothes—I humbly touched my cap, proud to be the attendant of His Magnificence. He kept his eyes fixed upon his horse's ears, noticing nothing and nobody, but when we had gone at a snail's trot down one road, and up another and around by a third to the other side of the camp and passed the last picket,

I saw that he held his lower lip hard under his teeth and his face was red with rage and mortification.

"I was sorry for him from the bottom of my heart. So sorry that had it not been for what he could tell of my reconnoissance and its object, I would have sent him back then and there to beautify the scene we had just left. As it was, I carried him into our lines and gave him up, with my report, at headquarters.

"An hour afterwards a saucy lieutenant came to my hut, roaring with laughter.

"'You've done it this time, Crutch,' said the rascal. 'Do you know what you've brought in? The colonel of a Yankee play-regiment—a three monther. It seems he left his men in Washington to be drilled and ran down in his Sunday clothes to visit a sure-enough camp, where he happened to have acquaintances, bringing his own orderly with him. They got there yesterday and started off this morning to see something of the country. Didn't dream they were on rebel territory until he was taken prisoner by what he must consider an unmilitary manœuvre. Wants to be sent back with an apology under flag of truce. Has influential friends under government who will not submit tamely to this outrage.

"'If you had fetched in his uniform stuffed with straw it would have been of more account to us. We could have stuffed our beds with that. This creature is not worth the keeping and we daren't turn him loose. The last batch of Yanks were sent forward to the Libby last night, so your friend will be lonesome I'm afraid. When I left, the general was swearing like forty troopers because a guard must be detailed to take care of this "sugar-candy cuss." You've drawn a white elephant, my boy!'

"That was the origin of the name that stuck to the fellow like shoemaker's wax. We were hard-run for jokes just then, and this one took tremendously. I wished a thousand times a day I had left the orange-and-blue parrot to devour half-ripe persimmons until his mouth was puckered out of whistling order for a month of Sundays. The prison barracks was called the menagerie, and I, Barnum, and the usual salutation between two men meeting in my hearing was, 'I say! [redacted] you seen the elephant?'

"It took more moral courage than you'd believe to spur me up to the duty of visiting him every day, and there was nothing tempting in the calls themselves. For a few days he was as sulky as a possum, wouldn't eat or speak when anybody was by; just lay on his bunk with his face to the wall. I took him books and tobacco and writing materials (such as we had), and spoke to the guard about treating him well. I couldn't do less—having got him into the scrape. I would have done much more to make his situation endurable, if he had let me. On the first Sunday he spent with us, I found him up and writing.

"He glanced around and nodded to my salute.

"'Well, Colonel,' said I, 'How goes it? What can I do for you, to-day?'

"'I want to send a letter through the lines.' He was gruff, but not sullen. 'I guess *you* can do it, if anybody can!'

"I tried not to smile.

"'I don't know about that! Your pickets are on the lookout for me just now, I reckon, and not in a humor for the exchange of civilities. I have known them on both sides to swap newspapers and tobacco by pitching them across a road or creek. There are ways and means, however. I'll do my best to get your letter through by what we call the "grapevine telegraph."'

"He stared hard, but only said, 'Thank you!'

"Presently he handed me a letter directed to 'Mrs. Colonel George W. Judson, Orange, New Jersey.'

"'I thought you were a New Yorker!' said I, before I remembered that it was impolite to see the address, more rude to remark upon it.

"But the 'Orange, New Jersey,' caught my eye, and there were reasons why it should.

"He scowled, as was natural and proper, at my impertinence.

"'My wife is, at present, staying at her father's—during my absence.'

"He jumped up and walked to the door.

"'I have a confounded headache to-day!' he said in a choked voice.

"I had to remind myself of the preparations on foot to break up the obnoxious camp founded upon my

reconnoissance and report before I could feel like an honest man again, and not a kidnapper.

"'I am mighty sorry for you, Colonel—upon my word I am!' I told him in all sincerity. 'I wish it hadn't been a military necessity to capture you, and against military rules to set you free this very minute.' Then—clumsily enough, but I didn't know just how to fetch it out—'I am sorrier still that you are married. Soldiers ought all to be single men.'

"He wheeled about, red and angry—spoke up more like a man than I had thought was in him.

"'My wife and I agreed when the North was invaded, that that was carrying the joke a little too far—that it was time United States citizens of wealth and influence took the field. I raised my regiment, sir. If every Northern man would exert himself as I have done the Rebellion would be stamped out in ninety days!'

"'Upon my soul, I reckon you're about right,' said I, and I was sincere in that, too. 'Mrs. Judson has cause to be proud of having married a true patriot. She must be a noble woman.'

"'There isn't another like her in the universe!' he burst out, choked up again, threw himself face downward on his bunk, and cried like a whipped schoolboy.

"It was my turn to look out of the door. The prospect wasn't inspiriting at its best, but I couldn't see it very distinctly now. I don't think it is in the nature of a sheep-stealing dog to feel meaner than I did at that particular minute. I'd have given a year of my life—right out—to be able to transport that overgrown baby, who meant well as hard as ever a man did, to the house of his father-in-law, and leave him there. He loved his country and he loved his wife, and his wife, for aught I knew, might live next door to Lucy Deane, whose home was in Orange, New Jersey. Military necessity was inhumanity, and I was a brute.

"The prison barracks were removed by four or five rods from the main camp. It was a rough log shanty, long and narrow, the chinks daubed with mud. At one end was a log and mud chimney, at the other the door; cotton cloth was tacked over the window frames to keep out the wind. A soldier would have been

satisfied with such winter quarters. But bless your heart! there was not an ounce of soldierhood in that fellow's body, whatever there might be in his soul. While he cried out his homesickness, I stood with my back to him, staring at the waste of red mud around me on which the rain was beginning to make desolate-looking puddles. The camp-collection of tents and log-huts was mean and dreary. The smoke from stove-pipes and chimneys dropped flat to the ground; half-a-dozen drenched sentinels were all the moving things in sight. A grove of pine trees flanked us on the right; 'way beyond were brown-black hills covered with mournful stumps. And behind me the man I had snatched from the paradise in which he wore orange and blue, and fine linen, and fared on canvas-back ducks, turtle soup, and champagne every day, was sobbing for the young wife waiting in her father's house (in Orange, New Jersey) for his return, crowned with laurels and such trash, by a grateful country. She would never have let him enter the army if she hadn't believed as sublimely and idiotically as she did in his ability to stamp out the Rebellion in ninety days. Other men with more brains held the same belief, even as late as '63.

"By-and-by he called out to me:

"'You take me for a coward and a baby, Mr. Crutchfield!' he said, trying to seem dignified. 'But my nerves have been severely tried lately, and I am far from well. This is not a dry location, and I have taken a heavy cold. My head, limbs, and back ache intensely. I seldom give way to emotion. I have myself in excellent control usually—excellent!'

"I told all the kind lies inevitable in the circumstances, and set myself to work to cheer him up. I had a roaring fire made in the chimney, hunted up a sutler, and paid ten dollars (Confederate) for enough ground (alleged) coffee to make him a cup of hot drink; finally, invited myself to dine, and sent for a double mess to be brought to me there. The colonel thawed out completely under this process; was friendly and forgiving, and talked like a house afire. Politics was the first topic; then he gave me the whole history of his life, at length and in detail; how his father was a rich merchant; where he went to school and college;

and how and when he had gone into business with his father; how he had met and fallen in love with her in '61, and married her on the 20th of June, '62; of the house built by his father and furnished by hers—and so forth and so on, until I might have thought he was drunk if there had been a chance of his getting at anything stronger than the (alleged) coffee.

"I bore it all like a saint—or the narrator's wife—until dark. Then I ordered in a big heap of lightwood knots to scare away the blue devils I was afraid might return when I left, shook hands with the colonel and hoped he might sleep well. His hands were hot and dry, his eyes watery.

"'I believe you *have* taken cold!' said I. 'I'll look in after supper and see how you are getting on.'

"'You are awfully good,' said he. 'Hold on a bit!' fumbling in his breast-pocket. 'I wouldn't show it to another Grayback alive. But you have a man's heart, by Jove! and I want you to see what justification I have for giving way as I did awhile ago. 'Tisn't like me to give way, Mr. Crutchfield, I have myself in excellent control, as a rule—excellent! *My wife's* picture, sir!'

"It was set in a pocket-case of velvet and gold, and painted on ivory, and as surely as he and I were standing together in that Heaven-forsaken mud-hole in the wilderness, Lucy Deane's face was inside of that frame!"

Not a word was spoken in the barn-like room as Crutchfield stooped for the tongs and a live coal to lay on the fresh tobacco with which he filled his pipe. His hand shook; he drew strongly and quickly on the stem, until the tobacco was ignited.

"I'm a rank fool—I know. No man knows it better; for I am shivery and achey all over to this day, when I recollect what shot through me as the glare of the lightwood fell on that picture. I held it with both hands to steady it for a fair look. Lucy's blue eyes—just the color of the summer sky, that was so fair above us that August holiday. Lucy's hair, rippling about her forehead and looking like a madonna's glory in the sunshine. Lucy's small red mouth. Lucy's smile! Hadn't I got the whole inventory by heart during the month I spent at the seagate of heaven in

1860? Having seen and talked with her on an average four hours a day for thirty days, and dreamed of her by night and day ever since, was it likely I should make any mistake as to identity, yet I made certain of this. Straightening myself up—the bending down toward the fire had cramped me queerly—I said:

"'I could be sure I had seen this face before. It reminds me of a young lady I met at Cape May in 1860. By the way, she was from New Jersey, a Miss Deane.'

"'Good gracious, man! why that was her! Her maiden name was Deane, and she used to spend a month or so every summer at Cape May. I remember hearing her tell of the splendid time she had that very year. *Of all* the coincidences!'

"I got away somehow, I hope, decently. When I found Rob Crutchfield again he was marching, like a sentinel, backward and forward, on the earthwork surrounding the camp, saying over and over like a befuddled donkey—'Of all the coincidences! of all the coincidences!'

"I had so few wits left that I could have sworn I smelt heliotrope—the spiced vanilla scent it gives out in a warm room when beginning to droop in a woman's belt or hand. I understood the illusion in another minute. Somebody somewhere was whistling 'The Blue Danube Waltz.' It sounded like a funeral march where I was. The wet pine tops complained together on one side of me; on the other the camp lights twinkled through the drizzle like drowning lightning bugs. A burying ground with a dozen new graves gaping for tenants would have been cheerful by comparison with my location and the morgue that was a young man's heart two or three hours ago. Mad with pain I rushed down the earthwork and through the mud and fog to the barracks. The door was wide open; that was the reason I heard the whistle so plainly. A broad streak of lurid light struck through the fine, close rain, and turned the puddles to blood. My prisoner was sitting on the block of wood that served him for a chair in front of the fire, on which he had piled all the lightwood at once, whistling as for a wager of ten thousand dollars (hard money or greenbacks) a side.

"I shook him by the shoulder.

"'Stop that infernal racket!'

"He laughed foolishly, hugged his knees with his locked arms.

"Why, that's Lucy's favorite waltz. You ought to hear her play it once. Lucy's a capital performer on the piano. Beats Herz and Liszt and the rest of the professionals all hollow!'

"He was crazy with fever. I called in an orderly and between us we got him to bed, then the orderly ran for the surgeon.

"'In for pneumonia' was his opinion that night. 'Likely to be a bad case, too!'

"By ten o'clock next morning he had a different tale to tell.

"'You've done it for yourself, this time, young man,' he said, just as that rascally lieutenant had done. 'Here's the devil to pay. You've drawn a white elephant with a vengeance. This is small-pox! And you've stayed with him all night! You may be a Christian. You are certainly a confounded greenhorn. What's this Yank to you that you should run the risk of spoiling your manly beauty or'—with a savage growl—'what is more to the purpose, of depriving the Confederate army of a capital scout? This is what comes of your blamed officiousness. I have a great mind to send you to the guard-house.'

"You never saw a madder man, nor one more disgusted. You might have thought that I had manufactured the patient and his disease, or imported both with malice prepense.

"I stood stupefied, staring at the inflamed face and glassy eyes on the corn-shuck pillow. It was lumpy, and he rolled his head uneasily.

"'What is this man to me?' I repeated. 'My enemy, Doctor! There's no doubt about that!' and, stuttering along, by mechanical memory of good words my mother taught me when a boy, 'My enemy! sick and in prison and athirst! So I'll give him drink and stay here and take care of him. As you say, I'm in for it and may as well take my chances here as in the guard-house.'

"They quarantined us, of course, and I had in addition the pleasant consciousness that everybody

held me responsible for bringing that much dreaded plague into the camp, and echoed the doctor's curses upon my officiousness. For three weeks I touched no human hand except the patient's, the doctor's and that of the orderly, who had helped me put Judson to bed the night he was taken ill. The fellow had, luckily, had the small-pox. For the time this circumstance was the only ray of light I could discern upon present and future.

"No, gentlemen!" For there was audible movement of sympathy and admiration—"there was nothing noble or commendable in my action. I simply did not care at that time whether I lived or died. Sometimes, on nights, when I sat up alone with the frightful object his wife wouldn't have known for the superb Hercules she had married, the deadened heart within me would warm and stir under the thought that she might owe his life to me; that I could do this one thing for her; that if she hadn't forgotten me utterly, she might even guess that I had tended him, not as a Christian should the creature made in the image of their common Creator,—but for her sake. It wasn't a lofty motive. It may not have been an honorable or a manly impulse, but I submit that it was a natural and powerful one. With me it prevailed over loathing and selfish ease and loneliness, kept me from flinching when things were at their worst. I never knew how love for that girl had grown into, and wound roots about every fibre of my being, until the horrid ordeal of those three weeks tested it.

"There was a brisk skirmish that came near being a general engagement—while we were shut off from the world. The camp I had entered was surprised by night, and after some hours fighting, the Federals were driven back to a position more comfortable for them and for us. Our men had the longed-for chance to set their shoulders against the locked door, and it went down under the rush. The commanding general sent me a kind note the next morning, acknowledging the important service I had rendered the government and army, by the valuable information I had secured in my brilliant and daring exploit. I read it at Judson's bedside, and threw it into the fire. I was very low of heart that day.

"Last week I saw my three-year old boy, when a plaything that wasn't his was taken from him, dash himself on the floor, and holloa and kick at the offer of another and a better toy. If he couldn't have what he had set his heart and head on, he wanted nothing, and looked upon even his mother's comforting as an insult. I thought at the time that I knew just how he felt. I was hardly more than a boy when I ate my Sunday dinner in the prison barracks, and amiably swallowed my yawns, as Colonel G. W. Judson spun love and political yarns. I came out of my month's quarantine grave, steady and unhopeful. I had been badly hurt. When the right eye is plucked out, or the right hand struck off, the nervous system feels the jar long after the wound has healed up.

"For two weeks it had been an even chance with a slight tilt on the wrong side, whether my man lived or died. In all these fourteen days he had not a lucid moment, and all the time he was whistling or going through the motions.

"You may laugh, but it was the most drearsome thing you can conceive of. His eyes were swollen shut, his lips were parched and black, but he pursed them together for waltzes, psalm-tunes, negro melodies, marches, quicksteps, sonatas and 'movements,' by the score and hundred, a maddening, diabolical medley, until I thought he'd whistle away his immortal soul. He never held up, except when he was asleep, until the fever in going off, left him too weak to do so much as a bar of 'Yankee Doodle.'

"He was just able to travel when we broke camp in March and fell back to Richmond. In April there was an exchange of prisoners, and I strained all the poor influence I possessed to have him included. He was wonderfully little disfigured by the disease—I suppose because he was too busy whistling to tear at his face with his nails. We had a capital surgeon, too, as skilful as he was rough spoken, and he had used every possible means to save the colonel's good looks. When I parted with him at the Richmond depot, saw the tears in his eyes, and heard his voice break as he said 'farewell,' I thanked God, fervently, that since the infection was in his veins before I met and took him prisoner, he had been given into my hands. I had nursed

him as I would my brother—for his wife's sake. That he would never know and I never forget. He was very grateful. There was never a better-hearted fellow.

"'As I had to be sick among strangers, its deuced lucky you happened to get hold of me,' were his last words. 'But for you, my poor girl would be a widow instead of expecting her husband home. I shall never forget your goodness and shall love you forever when I've told her all about it.'

"In damp weather, the maimed limb aches and throbs. The neuralgic twinges of thought went through me, as he said that. The reflection that once—and not so long ago—*that* was not the argument I had hoped to use to win Lucy Deane to love me forever.

"This was in the spring of '64. In April '65, I went home for good and all, with a pass signed by U. S. Grant, U. S. A., in my pocket.

"In May, I received a letter from Judson, directed to my father's care. He had, this stated, written to me several times by flag of truce, but I had not heard from him since our parting, a year before. He was sure this would reach me if I were alive, and he desired to put his purse, house and business influence at my service. There was a flourish of compassionate patronage throughout the epistle that sat ill upon the stomach of a defeated rebel, but the honest good-will and sincere gratitude of the writer were yet more apparent.

"The last page was written by a woman, I saw that as I turned the leaf, and I had to lay the letter on the table to read the rest, so severe was the remembered and familiar neuralgic twinge. All women write pretty much alike nowadays, and what I call the "hickory splint hand." I had two or three notes trom Lucy Deane in reply to invitations, gifts of flowers and the like, and recognized the chirography at once.

"'My Dear Mr. Crutchfield'—it began—'although I never had the great pleasure of meeting you in person, I must call you a dear friend, because you were so good to my darling husband.'

"I declare to you, gentlemen, that was the worst cut of all—a savage jagged tear with a rusty blade. I was as a dead man, out of mind with the only woman I had ever loved—the woman for whom—

"I got up and stamped about the floor like one demented. Up to that instant I had kept my respect for her if she *had* married a handsome, rich gas-bag. She was never bound to me, although she must have known that I loved her, and no girl ever forgets the man who has once made love to her. But to disown our acquaintanceship, perhaps because her darling husband was to read what she wrote to the dear friend who had been so good to him was worse than ungrateful. It was unwomanly. Ah, well! I had worshipped my ideal —that was all. Now let us see what the real Lucy Deane Judson had to say further.

"It was a neat cut-and-dried note, commonplace to the last degree of inaneness, dotted with adjectives of gratitude and endearment, stuck in with the regularity of the pins in 'Welcome, Little Stranger!' on a baby's pincushion. It was signed 'L. D. Judson.' The signature set the tombstone above my dead-and-buried love.

"I was folding up the letter—a sadder and a cured man—when I espied a postscript squeezed into the margin at the side and top of the first page:

"'My favorite sister Lucy, who remembers with great pleasure her former delightful acquaintance with you at dear Cape May, sends her kind regards. My blessed George says you thought my picture very like her. She is ever so much prettier than

'Yours gratefully

'LAURA D. J'."

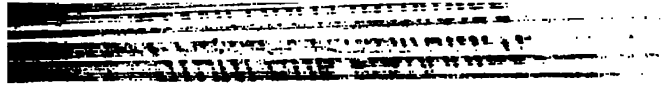
The narrative was broken short by round after round of applause from hands and feet. The only bachelor of the party jumped upon a chair and waved his pipe above his head, huzzahing lustily. When comparative silence was restored, Crutchfield rapped out the dead ashes from the bowl of his "Powhatan" upon the hearthstone; arose, glad and benignant, bowing his thanks.

"Gentlemen, my friends, one and all, we return to town day after to-morrow. On that evening I hope to see each member of this goodly company at my dinner-table. Mrs. Crutchfield resembles her sister, George Washington Judson's wife, in one respect, she is always happy to claim her husband's friends as her own."

Transcendental Wild Oats.

BY

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.



Louisa M. Alcott.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT was the daughter of Amos Bronson Alcott, and his wife, Abagail May. She was born at Germantown, Pa., on the thirty-third anniversary of her father's birth, November 29, 1832. When she was eight years of age she became a resident of Concord, Mass., where she spent the greater portion of her life. Her instructors were her father and mother, and Henry Thoreau. Mr. Alcott was a famous teacher, abolitionist, and intimate friend of Emerson's. He did not join the Brook Farm community, but in 1843 started a similar colony at Fruitlands, Harvard, Mass. The life of the family while there is described in "Transcendental Wild Oats," the story which Miss Alcott selected for this volume in February, 1888, shortly before her death. On their return to Concord they lived at the cottage called "The Wayside," afterward purchased by Hawthorne. Subsequently they resided at "The Orchards."

Miss Alcott wrote her first poem when she was eight years old, and her first book, called "Flower Fables" was published in 1855. Meanwhile she wrote a great number of short stories for various periodicals. Her first novel, called "Moods," was severely criticised. She taught school, was a governess for a time, and kept at her pen work continuously. When the war broke out she went to Washington and became a hospital nurse. Overworking, she fell a victim to typhoid fever, and came near to death. She recovered, but never was entirely well again. Her second book related her experiences as a nurse, and was called "Hospital Sketches."

In 1867 she published "Little Women," her most famous book, and two years later issued "An Old Fashioned Girl." Her third work was "Little Men," which had nearly as great a success. This latter book

was written in Rome, during a second foreign tour made by Miss Alcott; her first journey was undertaken in 1865, in company with an invalid lady with whom she went as a companion. Of her later works, "Aunt Jo's Scrap Bag" (in six volumes); "Work, a Story of Experience"; "Eight Cousins"; "Rose in Bloom"; "Under the Lilacs"; "Proverb Stories"; "Spinning-Wheel Stories"; and "Lulu's Library," are equally popular. Her great success as an author enabled her to provide generously for her aged father—whose writings were not as successful as his daughter's—and to do a great deal of good in many directions.

Personally, Miss Alcott was a noble woman, well educated and cultivated. Her associations from her childhood were with a circle of rarely-gifted men and women, and she enjoyed the life-long friendship of Mr. Emerson. She made a fortune from her writings, and dispensed it with generous hand. Her devotion to her kindred was a beautiful trait in her character. She once said that her destiny, it seemed to her, was to fill the gaps in life: she had been a wife to her father; a mother to the orphaned daughter of her sister May, while still daughter and sister and friend as well. In her girlhood and youth she was a devoted daughter to her mother, whose hard struggle to rear her children and maintain the home she fully realized, and when she was no more needed by her family, she helped public movements and individuals as long as she lived. Miss Alcott did more than any other American woman to elevate the juvenile literature of her day, and when she died, February 29, the day after the death of her venerable father, her country people mourned as for a familiar friend, whose like they should no more greet in literature for the young.

TRANSCENDENTAL WILD OATS.

On the first day of June, 184–, a large wagon drawn by a small horse and containing a motley load, went lumbering over certain New England hills, with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain, and hail. A serene man with a serene child upon his knee was driving, or rather being driven, for the small horse had it all his own way. A brown boy with a William Penn style of countenance sat beside him, firmly embracing a bust of Socrates. Behind them was an energetic-looking woman, with a benevolent brow, satirical mouth, and eyes brimful of hope and courage. A baby reposed upon her lap, a mirror leaned against her knee, and a basket of provisions danced about her feet, as she struggled with a large, unruly umbrella. Two blue-eyed little girls, with hands full of childish treasures, sat under one old shawl, chatting happily together.

In front of this lively party stalked a tall, sharp-featured man, in a long blue cloak; and a fourth small girl trudged along beside him through the mud as if she rather enjoyed it.

The wind whistled over the bleak hills; the rain fell in a despondent drizzle, and twilight began to fall. But the calm man gazed as tranquilly into the fog as if he beheld a radiant bow of promise spanning the gray sky. The cheery woman tried to cover every one but herself with the big umbrella. The brown boy pillowed his head on the bald pate of Socrates and slumbered peacefully. The little girls sang lullabies to their dolls in soft, maternal murmurs. The sharp-nosed pedestrian marched steadily on, with the blue cloak streaming out behind him like a banner; and the lively infant splashed through the puddles with a duck-like satisfaction pleasant to behold.

Thus the modern pilgrims journeyed hopefully out

of the old world, to found a new one in the wilderness.

The editors of the "Transcendental Tripod" had received from Messrs. Lion and Lamb (two of the aforesaid pilgrims) a communication from which the following statement is an extract;—

"We have made arrangements with the proprietor of an estate of about a hundred acres which liberates this tract from human ownership. Here we shall prosecute our effort to initiate a Family in harmony with the primitive instincts of man.

"Ordinary secular farming is not our object. Fruit, grain, pulse, herbs, flax, and other vegetable products, receiving assiduous attention, will afford ample manual occupation, and chaste supplies for the bodily needs. It is intended to adorn the pastures with orchards, and to supersede the labor of cattle by the spade and pruning-knife.

"Consecrated to human freedom, the land awaits the sober culture of devoted men. Beginning with small pecuniary means, this enterprise must be rooted in a reliance on the succors of an ever-bounteous Providence, whose vital affinities being secured by this union with uncorrupted fields and unworldly persons, the cares and injuries of a life of gain are avoided.

"The inner nature of each member of the Family is at no time neglected. Our plan contemplates all such disciplines, cultures, and habits as evidently conduce to the purifying of the inmates.

"Pledged to the spirit alone, the founders anticipate no hasty or numerous addition to their numbers. The kingdom of peace is entered only through the gates of self-denial; and felicity is the test and the reward of loyalty to the unswerving law of love."

This prospective Eden at present consisted of an old red farm-house, a dilapidated barn, many acres of meadow-land, and a grove. Ten ancient apple-trees were all the "chaste supply," which the place offered as yet; but in the firm belief that plenteous orchards were soon to be evoked from their inner consciousness, these sanguine founders had christened their domain Fruitlands.

Here Timon Lion intended to found a colony of Latter Day saints, who, under his patriarchal sway,

should regenerate the world and glorify his name forever. Here Abel Lamb, with the devoutest faith in the high ideal which was to him a living truth, desired to plant a Paradise, where Beauty, Virtue, Justice and Love might live happily together, without the possibility of a serpent entering in. And here his wife, unconverted but faithful to the end, hoped, after many wanderings over the face of the earth, to find rest for herself and a home for her children.

"There is our new abode," announced the enthusiast, smiling with a satisfaction quite undamped by the drops dripping from his hat-brim, as they turned at length into a cart-path that wound along a steep hillside into a barren-looking valley.

"A little difficult of access," observed his practical wife, as she endeavored to keep her various household gods from going overboard with every lurch of the laden ark.

"Like all good things. But those who earnestly desire, and patiently seek will soon find us," placidly responded the philosopher from the mud, through which he was now endeavoring to pilot the much-enduring horse.

"Truth lies at the bottom of a well, Sister Hope," said Brother Timon, pausing to detach his small comrade from a gate, whereon she was perched for a clearer gaze into futurity.

"That's the reason we so seldom get at it, I suppose," replied Mrs. Hope, making a vain clutch at the mirror, which a sudden jolt sent flying out of her hands.

"We want no false reflections here," said Timon, with a grim smile, as he crunched the fragments under foot in his onward march.

Sister Hope held her peace, and looked wistfully through the mist at her promised home. The old red house with a hospitable glimmer at its windows cheered her eyes; and considering the weather, was a fitter refuge than the sylvan bowers some of the more ardent souls might have preferred.

The new-comers were welcomed by one of the elect precious—a regenerate farmer, whose ideas of reform consisted chiefly in wearing white cotton raiment and shoes of untanned leather. This costume with a

snowy beard, gave him a venerable, and at the same time a somewhat bridal appearance.

The goods and chattels of the society not having arrived, the weary family reposed before the fire on blocks of wood, while Brother Moses White regaled them on roasted potatoes, brown bread and water, in two plates, a tin pan, and one mug; his table service being limited. But, having cast the forms and vanities of a depraved world behind them, the elders welcomed hardship with the enthusiasm of new pioneers, and the children heartily enjoyed this foretaste of what they believed was to be a sort of perpetual picnic.

During the progress of this frugal meal, two more brothers appeared. One, a dark, melancholy man, clad in homespun, whose peculiar mission was to turn his name hind part before and use as few words as possible. The other was a blond, bearded Englishman, who expected to be saved by eating uncooked food and going without clothes. He had not yet adopted the primitive costume, however; but contented himself with meditatively chewing dry beans out of a basket.

"Every meal should be a sacrament, and the vessels used should be beautiful and symbolical," observed Brother Lamb, mildly, righting the tin pan slipping about on his knees. "I priced a silver service when in town, but it was too costly; so I got some graceful cups and vases of Britannia ware."

"Hardest things in the world to keep bright. Will whiting be allowed in the community?" inquired Sister Hope, with a housewife's interest in labor-saving institutions.

"Such trivial questions will be discussed at a more fitting time," answered Brother Timon, sharply, as he burnt his fingers with a very hot potato. "Neither sugar, molasses, milk, butter, cheese, nor flesh are to be used among us, for nothing is to be admitted which has caused wrong or death to man or beast."

"Our garments are to be linen till we learn to raise our own cotton or some substitute for woolen fabrics," added Brother Abel, blissfully basking in an imaginary future as warm and brilliant as the generous fire before him.

"Haou abaout shoes?" asked Brother Moses, surveying his own with interest.

"We must yield that point till we can manufacture an innocent substitute for leather. Bark, wood, or some durable fabric will be invented in time. Meanwhile, those who desire to carry out our idea to the fullest extent can go barefooted," said Lion, who liked extreme measures.

"I never will, nor let my girls," murmured rebellious Sister Hope, under her breath."

"Haow do you cattle'ate to treat the ten-acre lot? Ef things ain't 'tended to right smart, we shan't hev no crops," observed the practical patriarch in cotton.

"We shall spade it," replied Abel, in such perfect good faith that Moses said no more, though he indulged in a shake of the head as he glanced at hands that had held nothing heavier than a pen for years. He was a paternal old soul, and regarded the younger men as promising boys on a new sort of lark.

"What shall we do for lamps, if we cannot use any animal substance? I do hope light of some sort is to be thrown upon the enterprise," said Mrs. Lamb with anxiety, for in those days kerosene and camphene were not, and gas was unknown in the wilderness.

"We shall go without till we have discovered some vegetable oil or wax to serve us," replied Brother Timon, in a decided tone, which caused Sister Hope to resolve that her private lamp should always be trimmed, if not burning.

"Each member is to perform the work for which experience, strength and taste best fit him," continued Dictator Lion. "Thus drudgery and disorder will be avoided and harmony prevail. We shall rise at dawn, begin the day by bathing, followed by music, and then a chaste repast of fruit and bread. Each one finds congenial occupation until the meridian meal, when some deep-searching conversation gives rest to the body and development to the mind. Healthful labor again engages us till the last meal, when we assemble in social communion prolonged till sunset, when we retire to sweet repose, ready for the next day's activity."

"What part of the work do you incline to yourself?"

asked Sister Hope, with a humorous glimmer in her keen eyes.

"I shall wait till it is made clear to me. Being in preference to doing is the great aim, and this comes to us rather by a resigned willingness than a wilful activity, which is a check to all divine growth," responded Brother Timon.

"I thought so." And Mrs. Lamb sighed audibly for during the year he had spent in her family, Brother Timon had so faithfully carried out his idea of "being, not doing" that she had found his "divine growth" both an expensive and unsatisfactory process.

Here her husband struck into the conversation, his face shining with the light and joy of the splendid dreams and high ideals hovering before him.

"In these steps of reform, we do not rely so much on scientific reasoning, or physiological skill as on the spirit's dictates. The greater part of man's duty consists in leaving alone much that he now does. Shall I stimulate with tea, coffee, or wine? No. Shall I consume flesh? Not if I value health. Shall I subjugate cattle? Shall I claim property in any created thing? Shall I trade? Shall I adopt a form of religion? Shall I interest myself in politics? To how many of these questions,—could we ask them deeply enough—and could they be heard as having relation to our eternal welfare—would the response be 'Abstain?'"

A mild snore seemed to echo the last word of Abel's rhapsody, for Brother Moses had succumbed to mundane slumber and sat nodding like a massive ghost. Forest Absalom, the silent man, and John Pease, the English member, now departed to the barn; and Mrs. Lamb led her flock to a temporary fold, leaving the founders of the "Consociate Family" to build castles in the air till the fire went out and the symposium ended in smoke.

The furniture arrived next day, and was soon bestowed; for the principal property of the community consisted in books. To this rare library was devoted the best room in the house, and the few busts and pictures that still survived many flittings were added to beautify the sanctuary, for here the family was to meet for amusement, instruction, and worship.

Any housewife can imagine the emotions of Sister Hope, when she took possession of a large, dilapidated kitchen, containing an old stove and the peculiar stores out of which food was to be evolved for her little family of eleven. Cakes of maple sugar, dried peas and beans, barley and hominy, meal of all sorts, potatoes and dried fruits. No milk, butter, cheese, tea, or meat appeared. Even salt was considered a useless luxury and spice entirely forbidden by these lovers of Spartan simplicity. A ten years' experience of vegetarian vagaries had been good training for this new freak, and her sense of the ludicrous supported her through many trying scenes.

Unleavened bread, porridge and water for breakfast; bread, vegetables and water for dinner; bread, fruit and water for supper was the bill of fare ordained by the elders. No tea-pot profaned that sacred stove, no gory steak cried aloud for vengeance from her chaste gridiron; and only a brave woman's taste, time and temper were sacrificed on that domestic altar.

The vexed question of light was settled by buying a quantity of bayberry wax for candles; and, on discovering that no one knew how to make them, pine knots were introduced, to be used when absolutely necessary. Being summer, the evenings were not long, and the weary fraternity found it no great hardship to retire with the birds. The inner light was sufficient for most of them; but Mrs. Lamb rebelled. Evening was the only time she had to herself, and while the tired feet rested, the skilful hands mended torn frocks and little stockings, or anxious heart forgot its burdens in a book.

So "mother's lamp" burnt steadily, while the philosophers built a new heaven and earth by moonlight; and through all the metaphysical mists and philanthropic pyrotechnics of that period Sister Hope played her own little game of "throwing light," and none but the moths were the worse for it.

Such farming was probably never seen before since Adam delved. The band of brothers began by spading garden and field; but a few days of it lessened their ardor amazingly. Blistered hands and aching backs suggested the expediency of permitting the use

of cattle till the workers were better fitted for noble toil by a summer of the new life.

Brother Moses brought a yoke of oxen from his farm —at least, the philosophers thought so till it was discovered that one of the animals was a cow; and Moses confessed that he "must be let down easy, for he couldn't live on garden sarse entirely."

Great was Dictator Lion's indignation at this lapse from virtue. But time pressed, the work must be done; so the meek cow was permitted to wear the yoke and the recreant brother continued to enjoy forbidden draughts in the barn, which dark proceeding caused the children to regard him as one set apart for destruction.

The sowing was equally peculiar, for owing to some mistake, the three brethren who devoted themselves to this graceful task, found when about half through the job that each had been sowing a different sort of grain in the same field; a mistake which caused much perplexity as it could not be remedied; but, after a long consultation, and a good deal of laughter, it was decided to say nothing and see what would come of it.

The garden was planted with a generous supply of useful roots and herbs; but, as manure was not allowed to profane the virgin soil, few of these vegetable treasures ever came up. Purslane reigned supreme, and the disappointed planters ate it philosophically, deciding that Nature knew what was best for them, and would generously supply their needs, if they could only learn to digest her "sallets" and wild roots.

The orchard was laid out, a little grafting done, new trees and vines set, regardless of the unfit season and entire ignorance of the husbandmen, who honestly believed that in the autumn they would reap a bounteous harvest.

Slowly things got into order, and rapidly rumors of the new experiment went abroad, causing many strange spirits to flock thither, for in those days communities were the fashion and transcendentalism raged wildly. Some came to look on and laugh, some to be supported in poetic idleness, a few to believe sincerely and work heartily. Each member was allowed to mount his favorite hobby, and ride it to his heart's

content. Very queer were some of the riders, and very rampant some of the hobbies.

One youth, believing that language was of little consequence if the spirit was only right, startled newcomers by blandly greeting them with "Good-morning, damn you," and other remarks of an equally mixed order. A second irrepressible being held that all the emotions of the soul should be freely expressed, and illustrated his theory by antics that would have sent him to a lunatic asylum, if as an unregererate wag said, he had not already been in one. When his spirit soared, he climbed trees and shouted; when doubt assailed him, he lay upon the floor and groaned lamentably. At joyful periods he raced, leaped and sang; when sad, he wept aloud; and when a great thought burst upon him in the watches of the night he crowed like a jocund cockerel, to the great delight of the children and the great annoyance of the elders. One musical brother fiddled whenever so moved, sang sentimentally to the four little girls, and put a music-box on the wall when he hoed corn.

Brother Pease ground away at his uncooked food, or browsed over the farm on sorrel, mint, green fruit, and new vegetables. Occasionally he took his walk abroad, airily attired in an unbleached cotton *poncho*, which was the nearest approach to the primeval costume he was allowed to indulge in. At midsummer he retired to the wilderness, to try his plan where the woodchucks were without prejudices and huckleberry bushes were hospitably full. A sunstroke unfortunately spoilt his plan, and he returned to semi-civilization a sadder and a wiser man.

Forest Absalom preserved his Pythagorean silence, cultivated his fine dark locks, and worked like a beaver, setting an excellent example of brotherly love, justice and fidelity by his upright life. He it was who helped overworked Sister Hope with her heavy washes, kneaded the endless succession of batches of bread, watched over the children, and did the many tasks left undone by the brethren who were so busy discussing and defining great duties that they forgot to perform the small ones.

Moses White patiently plodded about, "chorin' raound," as he called it, looking like an old-time patri-

arch, with his silver hair and flowing beard, and saving the community from many a mishap by his thrift and Yankee shrewdness.

Brother Lion domineered over the whole concern; for, having put the most money into the speculation, he was determined to make it pay—as if anything founded on an ideal basis could be expected to do so by any but enthusiasts.

Abel Lamb simply revelled in the Newness, firmly believing that his dream was to be beautifully realized, and in time, not only a little Fruitlands, but the whole earth be turned into a Happy Valley. He worked with every muscle of his body, for he was in deadly earnest. He taught with his whole head and heart; planned and sacrificed, preached and prophesied, with a soul full of the purest aspirations, most unselfish purposes, and desires for a life devoted to God and man, too high and tender to bear the rough usage of this world.

It was a little remarkable that only one woman ever joined this community. Mrs. Lamb merely followed wherever her husband led,—"as ballast for his balloon," as she said in her bright way.

Miss Jane Gage was a stout lady of mature years, sentimental, amiable and lazy. She wrote verse copiously. and had vague yearnings and graspings after the unknown, which led her to believe herself fitted for a higher sphere than any she had yet adorned.

Having been a teacher, she was set to instructing the children in the common branches. Each adult member took a turn at the infants; and, as each taught in his own way, the result was a chronic state of chaos in the minds of these much afflicted innocents.

Sleep, food and poetic musings, were the desires of dear Jane's life, and she shirked all duties as clogs upon her spirit's wings. Any thought of lending a hand with the domestic drudgery, never occurred to her; and when to the question, "Are there any beasts of burden on the place?" Mrs. Lamb answered, with a face that told its own tale, "Only one woman!" the buxom Jane took no shame to herself, but laughed at the joke, and let the stout-hearted sister tug on alone.

Unfortunately, the poor lady hankered after the

flesh-pots, and endeavored to stay herself with private sips of milk, crackers, and cheese, and on one dire occasion she partook of fish at a neighbor's table. One of the children reported this sad lapse from virtue, and poor Jane was publicly reprimanded by Timon.

"I only took a little bit of the tail," sobbed the penitent poetess.

"Yes, but the whole fish had to be tortured and slain that you might tempt your carnal appetite with one taste of the tail. Know ye not, consumers of flesh meat, that ye are nourishing the wolf and tiger in your bosoms?"

At this awful question and the peal of laughter that arose from some of the younger brethren, tickled by the ludicrous contrast between the stout sinner, the stern judge, and the naughty satisfaction of the young detective, poor Jane fled from the room to pack her trunk, and return to a world where fishes' tails were not forbidden fruit.

Transcendental wild oats were sown broadcast that year, and the fame thereof has not ceased in the land; for, futile as this crop seemed to outsiders, it bore an invisible harvest, worth much to those who planted in earnest. As none of the members of this particular community have ever recounted their experiences before, a few of them may not be amiss, since the interest in these attempts has never died out and Fruitlands was the most ideal of all these castles in Spain.

A new dress was invented, since cotton, silk and wool were forbidden as the product of slave-labor, worm-slaughter, and sheep-robbery. Tunics and trowsers of brown linen were the only wear. The women's skirts were longer, and their straw hat-brims wider than the men's, and this was the only difference. Some persecution lent a charm to the costume, and the long-haired linen-clad reformers quite enjoyed the mild martyrdom they endured when they left home. Money was abjured as the root of all evil. The produce of the land was to supply most of their wants, or to be exchanged for the few things they could not grow. This idea had its inconveniences; but self-denial was the fashion, and it was surprising how many things one could do without. When they desired to

travel they walked, if possible, begged the loan of a vehicle, or boldly entered car or coach, and, stating their principles to the officials, took the consequences. Usually their dress, their earnest frankness, and gentle resolution won them a passage; but now and then they met with hard usage, and had the satisfaction of suffering for their principles.

On one of these penniless pilgrimages they took passage on a boat, and, when fare was demanded, artlessly offered to talk instead of pay. As the boat was well under way and they actually had not a cent, there was no help for it. So Brothers Lion and Lamb held forth to the assembled passengers in their most eloquent style. There must have been something effective in this conversation, for the listeners were moved to take up a contribution for these inspired lunatics, who preached peace on earth and good-will to man so earnestly, with empty pockets. A goodly sum was collected; but when the captain presented it the reformers proved that they were consistent even in their madness, for not a penny would they accept, saying, with a look at the group about them, whose indifference or contempt had changed to interest and respect, "You see how well we get on without money;" and so went serenely on their way, with their linen blouses flapping airily in the cold October wind.

They preached vegetarianism everywhere and resisted all temptations of the flesh, contentedly eating apples and bread at well-spread tables, and much afflicting hospitable hostesses by denouncing their food and taking away their appetites, discussing the "horrors of shambles," the "incorporation of the brute in man," and "on elegant abstinence the sign of a pure soul." But, when the perplexed or offended ladies asked what they should eat, they got in reply a bill of fare consisting of "bowls of sunrise for breakfast," "solar seeds of the sphere," "dishes from Plutarch's chaste table," and other viands equally hard to find in any modern market.

Reform conventions of all sorts were haunted by these brethren, who said many wise things and did many foolish ones. Unfortunately, these wanderings interfered with their harvests at home; but the rule was to do what the spirit moved, so they left their

crops to Providence, and went a-reaping in wider, and, let us hope, more fruitful fields than their own. Luckily the earthly Providence who watched over Abel Lamb was at hand to glean the scanty crop yielded by the "uncorrupted land" which, "consecrated to human freedom," had received "the sober culture of devout men."

About the time the grain was ready to house, some call of the Oversoul wafted all the men away. An easterly storm was coming up and the yellow stacks were sure to be ruined. Then Sister Hope gathered her forces. Three little girls, one boy (Timon's son), and herself, harnessed to clothes-baskets and Russia-linen sheets, were the only teams she could command; but with these poor appliances the indomitable woman got in the grain and saved food for her young, with the instinct and energy of a mother-bird with a brood of hungry nestlings to feed.

This attempt at regeneration had its tragic as well as its comic side, though the world saw only the former.

With the first frosts, the butterflies, who had sunned themselves in the new light through the summer, took flight, leaving the few bees to see what honey they had stored for winter use. Precious little appeared beyond the satisfaction of a few months of holy living. At first it seemed as if a chance of holy dying also was to be offered them. Timon, much disgusted with the failure of the scheme, decided to retire to the Shakers, who seemed to be the only successful community going.

"What is to become of us?" asked Mrs. Hope, for Abel was heart-broken at the bursting of his lovely bubble.

"You can stay here, if you like, till a tenant is found. No more wood must be cut however, and no more corn ground. All I have must be sold to pay the debts of the concern, as the responsibility rests with me," was the cheering reply.

"Who is to pay us for what we have lost? I gave all I had—furniture, time, strength, six months of my children's lives,—and all are wasted. Abel gave himself body and soul, and is almost wrecked by hard work and disappointment. Are we to have no return

for this, but left to starve and freeze in an old house, with winter at hand, no money, and hardly a friend left, for this wild scheme has alienated nearly all we had. You talk much about justice. Let us have a little, since there is nothing else left."

But the woman's appeal met with no reply but the old one: "It was an experiment. We all risked something, and must bear our losses as we can."

With this cold comfort, Timon departed with his son, and was absorbed into the Shaker brotherhood, where he soon found that the order of things was reversed, and it was all work and no play.

Then the tragedy began for the forsaken little family. Desolation and despair fell upon Abel. As his wife said, his new beliefs had alienated many friends. Some thought him mad, some unprincipled. Even the most kindly thought him a visionary, whom it was useless to help till he took more practical views of life. All stood aloof, saying, "Let him work out his own ideas, and see what they are worth."

He had tried, but it was a failure. The world was not ready for Utopia yet, and those who attempted to found it got only laughed at for their pains. In other days, men could sell all and give to the poor, lead lives devoted to holiness and high thought, and, after the persecution was over, find themselves honored as saints or martyrs. But in modern times these things are out of fashion. To live for one's principles, at all costs, is a dangerous speculation; and the failure of an ideal, no matter how humane and noble, is harder for the world to forgive and forget than bank robbery or the grand swindles of corrupt politicians.

Deep waters now for Abel, and for a time there seemed no passage through. Strength and spirits were exhausted by hard work and too much thought. Courage failed, when, looking about for help, he saw no sympathizing face, no hand outstretched to help him, no voice to say cheerily,—"We all make mistakes, and and it takes many experiences to shape a life. Try again, and let us help you."

Every door was closed, every eye averted, every heart cold, and no way open whereby he might earn bread for his children. His principles would not permit him to do many things that others did; and in the

few fields where conscience would allow him to work, who would employ a man who had flown in the face of society as he had done?

Then this dreamer, whose dream was the life of his life, resolved to carry out his idea to the bitter end. There seemed no place for him here,—no work, no friend. To go begging conditions was as ignoble as to go begging money. Better perish of want than sell one's soul for the sustenance of his body. Silently he lay down upon his bed, turned his face to the wall, and waited with pathetic patience for death to cut the knot which he could not untie. Days and nights went by, and neither food or water passed his lips. Soul and body were dumbly struggling together, and no word of complaint betrayed what either suffered. His wife, when tears and prayers were unavailing, sat down to wait the end with a mysterious awe and submission; for in this entire resignation of all things there was an eloquent significance to her who knew him as no other human being did.

"Leave all to God," was his belief; and, in this crisis the loving soul clung to this faith, sure that the All-wise Father would not desert this child who tried to live so near to him. Gathering her children about her she waited the issue of the tragedy that was being enacted in that solitary room, while the first snow fell outside untrodden by the footprints of a single friend.

But the strong angels who sustain and teach perplexed souls came and went, leaving no trace without, but working miracles within. For, when all other sentiments had faded into dimness, all other hopes died utterly; when the bitterness of death was nearly over, when body was past any pang of hunger or thirst, and soul stood ready to depart, the love that outlives all else refused to die. Head had bowed to defeat, hand had grown weary with heavy tasks, but heart could not grow cold to those who lived in its tender depths, even when death touched it.

"My faithful wife, my little girls,—they have not forsaken me, they are mine by ties that none can break. What right have I to leave them alone? what right to escape from the burden and sorrow I have helped to bring? This duty remains to me, and I must do it

manfully. For their sakes, the world will forgive me in time: for their sakes, God will sustain me now."

Too feeble to rise, Abel groped for the food that always lay within his reach, and in the darkness and solitude of that memorable night, ate and drank what was to him the bread and wine of a new communion, a new dedication of heart and life to the duties that were left him when the dreams fled.

In the early dawn, when that sad wife crept fearfully to see what change had come to the patient face on the pillow, she saw it smiling at her, and heard a feeble voice cry out bravely, "Hope!"

What passed in that little room is not to be recorded except in the hearts of those who suffered and endured much for love's sake. Enough for us to know that soon the wan shadow of a man came forth, leaning on the arm that never failed him, to be welcomed and cherished by the children, who never forgot the experiences of that time.

"Hope" was the watchword now; and while the last log blazed on the hearth, the last bread and apples covered the table, the new commander, with recovered courage, said to her husband,—

"Leave all to God—and me. He has done his part; now I will do mine."

"But we have no money, dear."

"Yes, we have. I sold all we could spare, and have enough to take us away from this snow-bank."

"Where can we go?"

"I have engaged four rooms at our good neighbor's, Lovejoy. There we can live cheaply till spring. Then for new plans, and a home of our own, please God."

"But, Hope, your little store won't last long, and we have no friends."

"I can sew, and you can chop wood. Lovejoy offers you the same pay as he gives his other men; my old friend, Mrs. Truman will send me all the work I want; and my blessed brother stands by us to the end. Cheer up, dear heart, for while there is work and love in the world we shall not suffer."

"And while I have my good angel, Hope, I shall not despair, even if I wait another thirty years before I step beyond the circle of the sacred little world in which I have still a place to fill."

So one bleak December day, with their few possessions piled on an ox-sled, the rosy children perched a-top, and the parents trudging arm in arm behind, the exiles left their Eden and faced the world again.

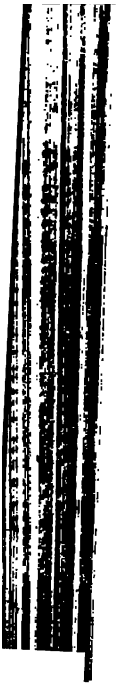
"Ah, me! my happy dream! How much I leave behind that can never be mine again," said Abel, looking back at the lost Paradise, lying white and chill, in its shroud of snow.

"Yes, dear; but how much we bring away," answered brave-hearted Hope, glancing from husband to children.

"Poor Fruitlands! The name was as great a failure as the rest!" continued Abel, with a sigh, as a frost-bitten apple fell from a leafless bough at his feet.

But the sigh changed to a smile, as his wife added, in a half-tender, half-satirical tone,—

"Don't you think that Apple Slump would be a better name for it, dear?"



DAVE'S WIFE.

BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

ELLA WHEELER might be said to have suddenly appeared upon the poetical horizon in her volume called "Poems of Passion." Though not her first work it was this which caused the public to realize that the far western state of Wisconsin had produced a poetess of surprising power and individuality. That it met with severe criticism from many sources did not blind any one to the fact that there was unusual force of expression and rhythmic beauty in the verses, whether they approved of them or not. In fact the wonder was, how this young girl had developed such powers of fancy and imagination, and such command of metrical composition, without apparently any special scholastic cultivation, or even any social environment calculated to favor such a precocious flow of sentiment.

Born in a prairie village, without influential friends, or any personal knowledge of literary people; unacquainted even with any editor or journalist, this young girl found it impossible to resist the impulse to pour out her youthful, immature thoughts, in rhymed measure. Her first verses, sent to the editor of the New York *Mercury* were rejected, and with that proverbial insight and inspiration which editors and publishers fancy they possess, she was calmly advised to give up her idea of becoming a poet.

But she viewed the situation differently, and continued to besiege the editorial sanctum with successive poems, under different *nom de plumes*, and finally with success. But it was the *Waverley Magazine* which first introduced her to the public under her own name. Two small volumes, almost juvenile in their character finally struggled into print. These were "Drops of Water" and "Shells," the former mainly devoted to enthusiastic pleas for temperance. Her next book was a great improvement upon these, both in form and sub-

steady-going animal. We had a four-year-old colt too, that I drove with her. Wa-al, Dave he thought it was a shame and a disgrace to drive such a ill-matched span. The young hoss was right up and off, and the bay mare she lagged behind about half a length. The young hoss was a short stepper, and the bay mare went with a long, easy lope. They wasn't a nice-matched span, I do confess.

"Wa'al, Dave he kept a-talkin' trade to me till I give in. He said he knew of a mighty nice match for the young hoss, and if I would leave it to him he'd make a good trade. So I left it to him, and one day he come drivin' home in grand style. The old mare was traded off, and a dappled-gray four-year-old was in her place. A pretty creature to look at, but I knew, the minute I sot eyes onto her, that she'd never pull a plough through the stubble-ground, or haul a reaper up that side-hill o' mine.

"'Isn't she a beauty, father?' said Dave.

"'Yes,' says I; 'but handsome is as handsome does applies to hosses as well as to folks, I reckon. What can this 'ere mare do, Dave?'

"Dave's face was all aglow. 'Do!' says he. 'Why, she can trot a mile *in two minutes and three-quarters*, father, and I only give seventy-five dollars to boot 'twixt her and the old mare.'

"Wa'al, you see, I was just struck dumb at that there boy's folly, but I knew 'twa'n't no use to say a word then. I just waited, and it come out as I expected. The dappled-gray mare took us to church or to town in fine style—passed everything on the road slick as a pin. But she balked on the reaper, and give out entirely on the plough. And I hed to buy another mare for the hoss, and let the dappled mare stand in the stable, except when we put her in the carriage."

Deacon Somers paused and his glance rested on Deacon Bradlaw's questioning, puzzled face.

"Well?" interrogated Deacon Bradlaw.

"Wa'al," continued Deacon Somers, "Dave's marriage is off the same piece as his hoss trade. Pretty creature, and can outstrip all the girls round here in playin' and singin' and paintin' and dressin,' but come to washin' and bakin' and steady work—why, we'll hev to get somebody else to do that, and let her sit in the

parlor. Mother 'n' I both see that at a glance;" and the deacon sighed.

"I see, I see," mused Deacon Bradlaw, sympathetically. "Too bad! too bad! Dave knew her at college, I believe?"

"Yes; they graduated in the same class. She carried off all the honors, and the papers give her a long puff 'bout her ellycution. Dave's head was completely turned, and he kept runnin' back and forth to see her, till I thought the best thing for him to do was to marry her and be done with it. But Sarah Jane Graves would have suited mother 'n' me better. You know Dave and she was pretty thick before he went off to college."

"She's a powerful homely girl, though," Deacon Bradlaw said; "and the awkwardest critter I ever see stand in church choir and sing. Seems to be all elbows somehow."

"Ye-a-s—ye-a-s; a good deal like the bay mare Dave was so sot against—awkward, but steady-goin' and useful—more for use than show. Wa'al, wa'al, I must be going home; all the chores to do, and Dave's billin' and cooin'. Good afternoon. Come over and see us."

When Dave Somers and his bride walked up the church aisle, the next Sunday morning, over Parson Elliott's congregation there passed that indefinable flutter which can only be compared to a breeze suddenly stirring the leaves of a poplar grove. Every eye was turned upon the handsome, strong-limbed young man, and the fair, delicate girl at his side, who bore the curious glances of all these strangers with quiet, well-bred composure.

After service people lingered in the aisle for an introduction, in the manner of country village churches, where Sunday is the day for quiet sociability and the interchange of civilities. And after the respective friends of the family had scattered to their several homes, Dave's wife was the one universal topic of discussion over the Sunday dinner.

"A mighty pretty girl," "A face like a rose," "Too cute for anything," "Stylish as a fashion plate," "A regular little daisy," were a few of the comments

passed by the young men of the congregation. To these remarks the ladies supplemented their critical observations after the manner of women: "Her nose isn't pretty;" "Her mouth is too large;" "Her face was powdered—I saw it;" "Her hat was horrid;" "I don't like to see so much agony in a small place." But Sarah Jane Graves said: "She is lovely. I would give the world to be as pretty as she is. No wonder Dave loved her." And she choked down a lump in her throat as she said it.

All the neighboring people called on Dave's wife during the next month, and, with one or two exceptions, introduced the conversation by the question, "Well, how do you like Somerville?" To the monotony of this query Dave's wife varied her replies as much as was possible without contradicting herself. "I am quite delighted with the fertility of my mind," she laughingly remarked to Dave at the expiration of the first month. "To at least fifteen people who have asked me that one unvaried question I have invented at least ten different phrases in which to express my satisfaction with Somerville. I have said: 'Very much, thank you;' 'Oh, I am highly pleased;' 'Far better than I anticipated even;' 'I find it very pleasant;' 'It has made a very agreeable impression upon me;' and oh, ever so many more changes I have rung on that one idea, Dave!" and the young wife laughed merrily. But under the laugh Dave seemed to hear a minor strain. His face grew grave.

"I fear I did wrong to bring you here among these people," he said. "They are so unlike you—so commonplace. I fear you are homesick already, Madge."

"No, no; indeed you are wrong, Dave; indeed I am happy here, and like your friends," Madge protested, with tender earnestness.

But as the months went by it was plain to all eyes that Dave's wife was not happy, that she did not assimilate with her surroundings. She made no intimate friendships; she sat silent at the sewing society, and would not take an interest in the neighborhood gossip, which formed the main topic of conversation at these meetings. She would not take a class at Sunday-school, claiming that she was not fitted to explain

the Gospel to any unfolding, inquiring mind, as she was not at all sure that she understood it herself.

Dark insinuations were afloat that Dave's wife was an "unbeliever," or at least a Unitarian, and her fashionable style of dress marked her as "worldly-minded" at all events. Deacon Bradlaw and Deacon Somers held many an interview on the shady side of the village store, and "Dave's wife" always came up for discussion, sooner or later, during those interviews.

"She's settin' a bad example to all of Somerville," Deacon Bradlaw declared. "My gal Arminda's gettin' just as fussy and proud as a young peacock about her clothes; nothin' suits her now unless it looks stylish and cityfied. And I see there's a deal more extravagance in dress among all the women-folks since Dave's wife came with her high heels and her bustles and her trimmins. You ought to labor with her, Brother Somers."

Brother Somers sighed. "I do labor with her," he said, "but the poor thing don't know what to do. Her guardian—she was an orphan, you know—give her the little money she had left after her schoolin', to buy her weddin' fixin's. She'd no idee what plain folks she was a comin' among. So she got her outfit accordin' to the way she'd been brought up. Lord! she's got things enough to last her ten years, and all trimmed to kill, and all fittin' her like a duck's foot in the mud; and what can she do but wear 'em now she's got 'em, she says; and I can't tell her to throw 'em away and buy new. 'Twouldn't be economy. She's been with us nigh onto a year now, and she's never asked Dave for a cent's worth of anythin."

"But she's no worker; anybody can see that. And you've hed to keep a girl half the time since she's been with you," Deacon Bradlaw added, somewhat nettled that his neighbor made any excuses for Dave's wife, whose fair face and fine clothes and quiet reserve had inspired him with an angry resentment from the first.

"Ye-a-s, ye-a-s, that's true," Deacon Somers confessed. "She's no worker. Lord! the way she tried to make cheese; and the cookin' she did!

Mother hed to throw the cheese curd into the pig's swill, and the bread and cake she made followed it. More waste from that experiment of hers than we've hed in years; and she was flour from head to foot, and all of a perspiration, and sick in bed from cryin' over her failures into the bargain. The poor thing did try her very best. But it was like the dappled mare tryin' to haul the plough—she couldn't do it, wa'n't built for it."

When Deacon Somers reached home his brow was clouded. His good wife saw it, and questioned him as to the cause. He shook his head.

"I'm tròubled about church matters, mother," he said. "The debt fur that new steeple and altar, and all the rest of the expense we've been to the last two years, wears on me night an' day. And Deacon Bradlaw he's gettin' mad at some of the trustees, and says he'll never put another dollar into the church till they come forward and head a paper with fifty dollars apiece subscription. I know 'em all too well to think they'll ever do that, and Deacon Bradlaw he's a reg'lar mule. So the first we know our church'll be in a stew that will send half its members over to the rival church that's started up at Jonesville, with one o' them sensation preachers that draws a crowd like a circus," and Deacon Somers sighed.

"Isn't there something that can be done to raise the money?" asked Mother Somers, anxiously. "Can't we get up entertainments?"

"That's old, and 'taint strawberry season," sighed the deacon. "We couldn't charge more'n fifteen or twenty cents at the door, and that wouldn't bring in much for one entertainment, and nobody would turn out to a second. There don't seem to be no ingenuity among the young folks here 'bout gettin' up anything entertainin'. Our strawberry festival was just a dead failure—barely paid expenses."

Dave's wife, sitting with her pale face, which had grown very thin and wan of late, bent over a bit of sewing, suddenly looked up. Her listless expression gave place to one of animated interest. "Father Somers," she began, timidly, "do you suppose—do you think—I could get up a reading?"

"A what?" and Deacon Somers turned a surprised

and puzzled face upon his daughter-in-law. It was so new for her to betray any interest in anything.

"A reading. You know I took the prize for elocution when I graduated. I know ever so many things I could recite, and it might draw a crowd just from its being something new. We could charge twenty-five cents admission, and it would give the impression of something good, at least. After they had heard me once they could decide for themselves if I am worth hearing again."

Deacon Somers looked upon the glowing face and animated mien of Dave's wife with increasing wonder. Was this the listless girl he had seen a few moments before?

"'Pon my soul," he ejaculated, "I don't know but it might draw a crowd, just from curiosity. Everybody would go to see Dave's wife. Not that I hev much of a opinion of readin's; never heard any but once, and then I went to sleep. But it might draw, seenin' it's you. You can try it if you want to."

Dave's wife did try it. It was announced before service Sunday morning that Mrs. David Somers would give a reading in the church edifice on Thursday evening: admission, twenty-five cents. Proceeds to be applied toward the church debt.

Again there was a breezy stir in the congregation, and scores of eyes were turned upon Dave's wife, who sat in her silent white composure, with her dark eyes lifted to the face of the clergyman.

But Sarah Jane Graves could not help noticing as she had not before the marked change in the young wife's face since the day she entered that church a bride.

"How she is fading! I wonder if she is unhappy?" she thought.

Thursday night came fair and clear. As Deacon Somers had predicted, the announcement that Dave's wife was to give a reading had drawn a house; the church was literally packed. Dave's wife rose before her audience with no words of apology or introduction, and began the recitation of the old, hackneyed, yet ever beautiful

"Curfew shall not ring to-night."

It was new to most of the audience, and certainly the manner of its delivery was new to them. They forgot themselves, they forgot their surroudings, they forgot that it was Dave's wife who stood before them. They were alone in the belfry tower clinging with bleeding hands to the brazen tongue of the bell as it swung to and fro above the deaf old janitor's head. When the recitation was finished two or three of the audience found themselves on their feet. How they came there they never knew, and they sat down with a shamefaced expression.

Sarah Jane Graves was in tears, and one or two others wiped their eyes furtively, and then the old church walls rang with cheers. So soon as they subsided Dave's wife arose, and, with a sudden change of expression and voice began to give a recital of "An Evening at the Quarters." It was in negro dialect, and introduced one or two snatches of song and a violin air. To the astonishment of her audience Dave's wife picked up a violin at the appropriaie time, and played the air through in perfect time and tune; and then the house resounded to another round of cheers, and the entire audience was convulsed with laughter. Everything which followed, grave or gay, pathetic or absurd, was met with nods of approval, or the clapping of hands and the drumming of feet. Somerville had never known such an entertainment before. The receipts for the evening proved to be over forty dollars.

During the next three months Dave's wife gave two more readings, the proceeds of which paid half the church debt, and this so encouraged the members that old grudges and quarrels were forgotten, and Deacon Bradlaw and the elders made up the remaining half, and Somerville church was free from debt.

Yet Deacon Bradlaw was heard to say that while he was glad and grateful for all that Dave's wife had done, he did not in his heart approve of turning the house of God into a "the*a*tre." "She performed exactly like them women whose pictures are in the store winders in town," he said, "a-makin' everybody laugh or cry with their monkey-shines. I don't think it a proper to go on in the house of God. Never would hev

given my consent to it ef I'd known what sort of entertainment it was to be."

"Dave's wife ever been a actress?" he asked Deacon Somers when they next met.

"Actress? No. What put that into your head? answered Deacon Somers, with some spirit.

"Oh, nothin', nothin'; only her readin's seemed a powerful sight like a theatre I went to once. Didn't know she'd been on the stage; it's gettin' fashi'nable nowadays. Anyway, she's missed her callin'. Wait a minute, neighbor; don't hurry off so. I want to talk church matters."

"Can't," responded Deacon Somers, whipping up his horse. "Dave's wife is sick in bed, and I came to the store to git a few things for her—bitters, and some nourishin' things to eat. She's sort o' run down with the exertion she made in them readin's. She used to be just drippin' with perspiration when she got home."

Dave's wife was ailing for months, unable to do more than sit in her room and paint an hour or two each day. The house was filled with her paintings. They ornamented brackets, and stood in corners, and peeped from the folds of fans, and smiled from Dave's china coffee-cup.

One day Dave proposed to his wife that she should go to her old home—the home of her guardian—and make a visit.

"We've been married fifteen months now," he said, "and you've never been away. I think a change will do you good. You seem to be running down every day."

So she went. After an absence of ten days she wrote to Dave to send her paintings to her by express. She had need of them; would explain when she returned. Dave packed them carefully, and sent them with a sigh.

Poor Dave! He had come to realize that his marriage was a great mistake. To be sure, he loved Madge yet, but the romance of his youthful attachment had all passed away in the dull commonplace routine of his domestic life, where Madge had proved such an inefficient helpmeet.

He had been blindly in love with his divinity; elated with the fact that he had won her away from two or

three other suitors. Madge was a brilliant scholar and a belle, and with the blind faith of young love, Dave had believed that she would excel in domestic duties as in intellectual pursuits. Her ignominious failures, her utter uselessness, and his mother's constant and indisputable references to her inefficiency about the farm-work, had presented her to his eyes in a new light. The brilliant girl who was the pride of the college, and the helpless, thriftless wife whose husband was regarded with pity by a sympathetic neighborhood, were two distinct individuals, as were also the young elocutionist carrying off the honors of her class, and the tired, tearful woman weeping over her soggy bread and melted butter.

The success in her readings had revived his old pride in her for a time. But her consequent illness and listlessness had discouraged him.

Mrs. Somers saw the express package, and inquired what it was. Dave told her, remarking at the same time that he did not know what she intended to make of them.

"Maybe she's going to give 'em away to those who will appreciate 'em," suggested his mother. "I am sure we've no room for such rubbish. But her time's no more'n a settin' hen's and she might as well spend it in that way as any other. She can't do nothin' that amounts to anything."

"I think her readings amounted to a good deal," Dave responded, glad that he could once speak authoritatively of his wife's usefulness.

"Oh, yes; for that emergency. But its steady work that tells. Lor' pity you and father ef I couldn't do nothin' but give readings! Wonder where your meals would come from. Your marriage and your horse trade were 'bout off one piece, Dave. Your wife's pretty in the parlor or on the floor readin', and your mare looks nice and drives nice in the buggy. But they can't work."

Dave's wife came home at the expiration of a month, looking fresher and feeling stronger, she said. And [illegible]id not bring her paintings.

[illegible]con Somers came into Dave's room the night [illegible]er return, to talk about a certain piece of land

that was for sale. It "cornered on" to the deacon's farm, and a stream of water ran across it.

"It will be worth a mint of money to me," he said, "for I can turn that field into a pasture, and all my stock will water itself. But the man who's sellin' wants a hundred and fifty dollars down. He's goin' West, and must have that amount this week. I don't see the way clear to pay it, for expenses have been a good deal of late, takin' doctors' bills and hired help and all into consideration, and my ready money has run low. Do you think of anybody that'll be likely to lend us that amount for three months, Dave?"

But before Dave could reply, Dave's wife spoke.

"Father Somers," she said, "I can let you have the money—not as a loan, but as a gift. I have been of so little use to you, and have made you so much expense, I shall be very, very happy if you will let me do this for you." And rising up, she came and laid a little silken purse in Deacon Somers's hands.

"But where did you get it, child?" asked the wondering deacon, looking from the plethoric little purse to her face, which had flushed a rosy red.

"I sold my paintings," Dave's wife answered. "A gentleman happened to see a little thing I painted, and he said he knew where I could dispose of any quantity of such work. And, sure enough, I sold every one of those things I painted when I was sick, for good prices. And I decorated some plates for a lady, who paid me well for it. So I have one hundred and seventy-five dollars in that purse, which you are more than welcome to."

Deacon Somers removed his spectacles and mopped them with his silk handkerchief. "I can't do it, my child," he said; "it wouldn't be right. You must keep your own money."

"But I have no use for it," cried Dave's wife. "I intended to spend it all in Christmas gifts for the family, but this is better. I have everything I need. All I ask or desire is to be of some use—and to have you all love me," she added, softly.

"A hundred and seventy-five dollars for that trash! Well, the world is full of fools!" Mrs Somers ejaculated when she was told of what had occurred. But she looked at Dave's wife with an expression of surprised

interest after that, as if it was just dawning upon her that one might be of use in the world who could neither cook nor make cheese.

Deacon Somers's farm boasted a fine stone quarry, and he was very busily at work every spare moment, quarrying stone for the foundation of a new barn he was to build. One day Dave drove to town, ten miles distant, with a load of grain for market. It was September, and the market had risen during the last few days. All the neighboring farmers had turned out and hurried their grain away, Deacon Somers remained at home, quarrying stone. Mrs. Somers rang the great bell at noon-time, but he did not come. Then she grew alarmed.

"Some one must go up to the quarry and see if anything has happened," she said. And Dave's wife was off like a young deer before the words were out of her mouth.

It did not seem three minutes before she stood at the door again, with white lips, her dark eyes large with fright. "Father is wedged in under a great bowlder," she said. "You and the girl must go to him. Take the camphor and ammonia; it may sustain his strength until I can bring relief. I am going to ride the dappled mare to the village, and rouse the whole neighborhood."

"We have no saddle," gasped Mrs. Somers; "and the mare will break your neck."

"I can ride anything," Dave's wife answered as she sped away. "It was taught me with other useless accomplishments."

A moment later she shot by the door, and down the street toward the village. She had bridled the mare and buckled on a blanket and surcingle. She sat like a young Indian princess, her face white, her eyes large and dark, looking straight ahead, and urging the mare to her highest speed. Faster, faster she went, until the woods and fields seemed flying pictures shooting through the air. Half-way to the village, which was more than two miles distant, she met Tom Burgus, the blacksmith. She reined up the mare so suddenly she almost sat her down on her haunches.

"Deacon Somers has fallen under a bowlder in his

quarry," she cried. "Go to him—quick! Dave is away." Then she rode on.

At the village she roused half a dozen men, and to the strongest and most muscular she said: "Take this mare and put her to her highest speed. Tom Burgus is already there. You two can lift the bowlder, perhaps. I will ride with Dr. Evans."

The man mounted the mare, and was off like a great bird swooping close to the earth. He swept away and out of sight.

When Dr. Evans reined his reeking horse at the quarry, Tom Burgus and Jack Smith, who had ridden the mare from the village, were propping up the bowlder with iron bars, while Mrs. Somers and her help were trying to remove the deacon's inanimate form. The doctor and Dave's wife sprang to their assistance. In another moment he was free from his perilous position, and Dr. Evans was applying restoratives. "He will live," he said; "but in five minutes more, if help had not come, he would have been a dead man. It is very fortunate you had a swift horse in the stable, and a rider who could keep her seat," and he glanced around at Dave's wife just in time to see her fall in a limp heap.

Deacon Somers was quite restored to his usual health the following morning. "Dave's wife and the dappled mare saved my life," he said to Deacon Bradlaw, who came to call. "So the boy didn't make so poor a bargain either time, neighbor, as I once thought."

The deacon recovered rapidly, and just as rapidly Dave's wife lost strength and color. She faded before their eyes like some frail plant, and at last one day with a tired sigh she drifted out into the Great Unknown; and with her went the bud of another life, destined never to blossom on earth.

After they came home from the churchyard where they had left her to sleep, Dave found the dappled mare cast in her stall; her halter strap had become a noose about her slender throat. She was quite dead.

Over the low mound where "Dave's wife" sleeps the marble mockery of a tall monument smiles in irony at those who pause to read its flattering inscription,

It is so easy to praise the dead! And the memorial window sacred to her memory in Somerville church—a proposition of Deacon Bradlaw's—flushes in crimson shame while suns rise and set.

And a sturdy farm-horse pulls the plough through Dave's stubble field, and Sarah Jane drives the work in his kitchen.

THE DEACON'S WEEK.

BY

ROSE TERRY COOKE.

Yours very truly,
Rose Terry Cooke.

ROSE TERRY COOKE.

PITTSFIELD, in Massachusetts, has always considered itself an aristocratic town, cultured, refined, beyond the usual measure of even New England's aspirations. It must be happy now, since to its other attractions it can boast of the permanent presence of Mrs. Rose Terry Cooke, who with her husband, Mr. Rollin S. Cooke, took up her residence in its beautiful elm-shaded "East Street" more than a year ago. Rose Terry was born in Connecticut, in the suburbs of Hartford, in a farmhouse of the better sort, built on a farm owned by her father; her mother belonged to one of the oldest Wethersfield families, her name being Anne Wright Hurlbut. This lady had somewhat old-fashioned ideas of education, teaching her little daughter Rose to read before she was three years old, and at six demanding of her the study of Walker's Dictionary, columns of which had to be learned with their definitions, and compositions written including the words learned. With this exacting mother to encourage, or perhaps compel, this precocious child, the young creature was set to keeping a diary from the age of six to ten—which diary has been preserved to the present day. The dictionary saturating process gleams out of these infantile pages in such sentences as this: "To-day I imbued my fingers with the blood of cherries!" Her father having lost his property in the Morus Multicaulus speculation, moved into Hartford, and when Rose was about ten she was sent to the Hartford Female Seminary, and there her literary instinct induced her to beg admission to a class considered far beyond her capacity, being instruction in literature and composition given by the principal, Mr. Brace, to well-grown young ladies. She gained her point, which was no doubt a help to her in after life.

Rose found herself at sixteen necessitated to do something towards her own support, and when she graduated from the seminary became a teacher, first in private schools, then in the family of a friend.

By both father and mother she had been brought up in the severest puritanical habits and absolutely restricted from the company of young men; but that did not prevent nature from having its course, and the feelings of youth, thus arbitrarily suppressed in real life, bubbled up spontaneously and overflowed into printed verse.

Some of her earliest contributions were published in *Putnam's Magazine*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*, then in the *Galaxy*, published in Philadelphia, and in *Harper's*. Stories and poems have followed for years in quick succession. Mrs. Cooke has been particularly happy in her delineations of rustic New England life. One of these tales, entitled "Mrs. Flint's Married Experience," setting forth the "closeness" of the average farmer nature, was severely criticised as overwrought; but its correctness was proven by recourse to certain records, —town and church books, which exhibited just such a state of facts existing in the life history of certain people in the town of Torringford, Connecticut Another very popular story of Mrs. Cooke is "The Deacon's Week," republished in this volume.

THE DEACON'S WEEK.

THE communion service of January was just over in the church at Sugar Hollow; and people were waiting for Mr. Parkes to give out the hymn; but he did not give it out,—he laid his book down on the table, and looked about on his church.

He was a man of simplicity and sincerity, fully in earnest to do his Lord's work, and do it with all his might; but he did sometimes feel discouraged. His congregation was a mixture of farmers and mechanics, for Sugar Hollow was cut in two by Sugar Brook,—a brawling, noisy stream that turned the wheel of many a mill and manufactory; yet on the hills around it there was still a scattered population, eating their bread in the full perception of the primeval curse. So he had to contend with the keen brain and sceptical comment of the men who piqued themselves on power to hammer at theological problems as well as hot iron, with the jealousy and repulsion and bitter feeling that has bred the communistic hordes abroad and at home; while perhaps he had a still harder task to awaken the sluggish souls of those who used their days to struggle with barren hill-side and rocky pasture for mere food and clothing, and their nights to sleep the dull sleep of physical fatigue and mental vacuity.

It seemed sometimes to Mr. Parkes that nothing but the trump of Gabriel could arouse his people from their sins and make them believe on the Lord and follow his footsteps. To-day—no—a long time before to-day—he had mused and prayed till an idea took shape in his thought, and now he was to put it in practice; yet he felt peculiarly responsible and solemnized as he looked about him and foreboded the success of his experiment. Then there flashed across him, as words of Scripture will come back to the habitual Bible-reader, the noble utterance of Gamaliel concerning Peter and his brethren

when they stood before the council: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." So with a sense of strength the minister spoke.

"My dear friends," he said, "you all know, though I did not give any notice to that effect, that this week is the Week of Prayer. I have a mind to ask you to make it for this once a week of practice instead. I think we may discover some things, some of the things of God, in this manner, that a succession of prayer-meetings would not perhaps so thoroughly reveal to us. Now when I say this I don't mean to have you go home and vaguely endeavor to walk straight in the old way; I want you to take 'topics,' as they are called, for the prayer-meetings. For instance, Monday is prayer for the temperance work. Try all that day to be temperate in speech, in act, in indulgence of any kind that is hurtful to you. The next day is for Sunday-schools; go and visit your scholars, such of you as are teachers, and try to feel that they have living souls to save. Wednesday is a day for fellowship meeting; we are cordially invited to attend a union-meeting of this sort at Bantam. Few of us can go twenty-five miles to be with our brethren there; let us spend that day in cultivating our brethren here; let us go and see those who have been cold to us for some reason, heal up our breaches of friendship, confess our shortcomings one to another, and act as if, in our Master's words, 'all ye are brethren.'

"Thursday is the day to pray for the family relation; let us each try to be to our families on that day in our measure what the Lord is to his family, the church, remembering the words, 'Fathers, provoke not your children to anger;' 'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.' These are texts rarely commented upon, I have noticed, in our conference meetings; we are more apt to speak of the obedience due from children, and the submission and meekness our wives owe us, forgetting that duties are always reciprocal.

"Friday, the church is to be prayed for. Let us then, each for himself, try to act that day just as we think Christ, our great Exemplar, would have acted in our places. Let us try to prove to ourselves and the

world about us that we have not taken upon us his name lightly or in vain. Saturday is prayer-day for the heathen and foreign missions. Brethren, you know and I know that there are heathen at our doors here; let every one of you who will, take that day to preach the gospel to some one who does not hear it anywhere else. Perhaps you will find work that ye knew not of lying in your midst. And let us all, on Saturday evening, meet here again, and choose some one brother to relate his experience of the week. You who are willing to try this method please to rise."

Everybody rose except old Amos Tucker, who never stirred, though his wife pulled at him and whispered to him imploringly. He only shook his grizzled head and sat immovable.

"Let us sing the doxology," said Mr. Parkes; and it was sung with full fervor. The new idea had roused the church fully; it was something fixed and positive to do; it was the lever-point Archimedes longed for, and each felt ready and strong to move a world.

Saturday night the church assembled again. The cheerful eagerness was gone from their faces; they looked downcast, troubled, weary,—as the pastor expected. When the box for ballots was passed about, each one tore a bit of paper from the sheet placed in the hymn-books for that purpose, and wrote on it a name. The pastor said, after he had counted them :—

"Deacon Emmons, the lot has fallen on you."

"I'm sorry for't," said the deacon, rising up and taking off his overcoat. "I haint got the best of records, Mr. Parkes, now I tell ye."

"That isn't what we want," said Mr. Parkes. "We want to know the whole experience of some one among us, and we know you will not tell us either more or less than what you did experience."

Deacon Emmons was a short, thick-set man, with a shrewd, kindly face and gray hair, who kept the village store, and had a well-earned reputation for honesty.

"Well, brethren," he said, "I dono why I shouldn't tell it. I am pretty well ashamed of myself, no doubt, but I ought to be, and maybe I shall profit by what I've found out these six days back. I'll tell you just as it come. Monday, I looked about me to begin with. I am amazin' fond of coffee, and it ain't good for me

—the doctor says it ain't; but, dear me, it does set a man up good, cold mornings, to have a cup of hot, sweet, tasty drink, and I haven't had the grit to refuse. I knew it made me what folks call nervous, and I call cross, before night comes; and I knew it fetched on spells of low spirits, when our folks couldn't get a word out of me,—not a good one, any way; so I thought I'd try on that to begin with. I tell you it come hard! I hankered after that drink of coffee dreadful! Seemed as though I couldn't eat my breakfast without it. I feel to pity a man that loves liquor more'n I ever did in my life before; but I feel sure they can stop if they try, for I've stopped, and I'm a-goin' to stay stopped.

"Well, come to dinner, there was another fight. I do set by pie the most of anything; I was fetched up on pie, as you may say. Our folks always had it three times a day, and the doctor, he's been talkin' and talkin' to me about eatin' pie. I have the dyspepsy like everything, and it makes me useless by spells, and onreliable as a weathercock. An' Doctor Drake he says there won't nothin' help me but to diet. I was readin' the Bible that morning, while I sat waiting for breakfast, for 'twas Monday, and wife was kind of set back with washin' and all, and I come acrost that part where it says that the bodies of Christians are temples of the Holy Ghost, Well, thinks I, we'd ought to take care of 'em if they be, and see that they're kep' clean nor pleasant, like the church; and nobody can be clean and pleasant that has dyspepsy. But, come to pie, I felt as though I couldn't! and, lo ye, I didn't! I eet a piece right against my conscience; facin' what I knew I ought to do, I went and done what I ought not to. I tell ye my conscience made music of me consider'ble, and I said then I wouldn't never sneer at a drinkin' man no more when he slipped up. I'd feel for him and help him, for I see just how it was. So that day's practice giv' out, but it learnt me a good deal more'n I knew before.

"I started out next day to look up my Bible-class. They haven't really tended up to Sunday-school as they ght to, along back; but I was busy, here and there, there didn't seem to be a real chance to get to it. ll, 'twould take the evenin' to tell it all; but I found

one real sick, been abed for three weeks, and was so glad to see me that I felt fair ashamed. Seemed as though I heerd the Lord for the first time sayin', 'Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.' Then another man's old mother says to me before he come in from the shed, says she, 'He's been a-sayin' that if folks practised what they preached you'd ha' come round to look him up afore now, but he reckoned you kinder looked down on mill-hands. I'm awful glad you come.' Brethring, *so was I!* I tell you that day's work done me good. I got a poor opinion of Josiah Emmons, now I tell ye; but I learned more about the Lord's wisdom than a month o'Sundays ever showed me."

A smile he could not repress passed over Mr. Parkes' earnest face. The deacon had forgotten all external issues in coming so close to the heart of things; but the smile passed as he said:—

"Brother Emmons, do you remember what the Master said,—'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself'?"

"Well, it's *so*," answered the deacon, "it's so right along. Why, I never thought so much of my Bible-class, nor took no sech int'rest in 'em as I do to-day,—not since I begun to teach. I b'lieve they'll come more reg'lar now, too."

"Now come fellowship day. I thought that would be all plain sailin'; seemed as though I'd got warmed up till I felt pleasant towardst everybody; so I went around seein' folks that was neighbors, and 'twas easy; but when I come home at noon spell, Philury says, says she, 'Square Tucker's black bull is into th' orchard a-tearin' round, and he's knocked two lengths o'fence down flat!' Well, the old Adam riz up then, you'd better b'lieve. That black bull has been a-breakin' into my lots ever sence we got in th' aftermath, and it's Square Tucker's fence, and he won't make it bull-strong, as he'd oughter, and that orchard was a young one jest comin' to bear, and all the new wood crisp as cracklin's with frost. You'd better b'lieve I didn't have much feller-feelin' with Amos Tucker. I jest put over to his house and spoke up pretty free to him, when he looked up and says, says he, 'Fellowship-

meetin' day, ain't it, deacon?" I'd ruther he'd ha' slapped my face. I felt as though I should like to slip behind the door. I see pretty distinct what sort of life I'd been livin' all the years I'd been a professor, when I couldn't hold on to my tongue and temper one day!"

"Breth-e-ren," interrupted a slow harsh voice, somewhat broken with emotion, "*I'll* tell the rest on't. Josiah Emmons come around like a man an' a Christian right there. He asked me for to forgive him, and not to think 'twas the fault of his religion, because 'twas hisn and nothin' else. I think more of him to-day than I ever done before. I was one that wouldn't say I'd practise with the rest of ye. I thought 'twas everlastin' nonsense. I'd ruther go to forty-nine prayer-meetin's than work at bein' good a week. I believe my hope has been one of them that perish; it hain't worked, and I leave it behind to-day. I mean to begin honest, and it was seein' one honest Christian man fetched me round to't."

Amos Tucker sat down and buried his grizzled head in his rough hands.

"Bless the Lord!" said the quavering tones of a still older man from a far corner of the house, and many a glistening eye gave silent response.

"Go on, Brother Emmons," said the minister.

"Well, when next day come, I got up to make the fire, and my boy Joe had forgot the kindlin's. I'd opened my mouth to give him Jesse, when it come over me sudden that this was the day of prayer for the family relation. I thought I wouldn't say nothin'. I jest fetched in the kindlin's myself, and when the fire burnt up good I called wife.

"'Dear me!' says she, 'I've got such a headache, 'Siah, but I'll come in a minnit.' I didn't mind that, for women are always havin' aches, and I was jest a-going to say so, when I remembered the tex' about not bein' bitter against 'em, so I says, 'Philury, you lay abed. I expect Emmy and me can get the vittles to-day.' I declare, she turned over and give me sech a look; why, it struck right in! There was my wife, that had worked for an' waited on me twenty-odd year 'most scart because I spoke kind of feelin' to her. I went out and fetched in the pail o' water she'd always

drawed herself, and then I milked the cow. When I come in Philury was up fryin' the potatoes, and the tears a-shinin' on her white face. She didn't say nothin', she's kinder still; but she hadn't no need to. I felt a leetle meaner'n I did the day before. But 'twant nothin' to my condition when I was goin', towards night, down the suller stairs for some apples, so's the children could have a roast, and I heerd Joe, up in the kitchen, say to Emmy, 'I do b'lieve, Em, pa's goin' to die.'—'Why, Josiar Emmons, how you talk!'—'Well, I do; he's so everlastin' pleasant an' good-natered I can't but think he's struck with death.'

"I tell ye, brethren, I set right down on them sullar stairs and cried. I *did*, reely. Seemed as though the Lord had turned and looked at me jest as he did at Peter. Why, there was my own children never see me act real fatherly and pretty in all their lives. I'd growled and scolded and prayed at 'em, and tried to fetch 'em up,—jest as the twig is bent the tree's inclined, ye know,—but I hadn't never thought that they'd got right and reason to expect I'd do my part as well as they theirn. Seemed as though I was findin' out more about Josiah Emmons's shortcomin's than was real agreeable.

"Come around Friday I got back to the store. I'd kind o' left it to the boys the early part of the week, and things was a little cuterin' but I did have sense not to tear round and use sharp words so much as common. I began to think 'twas gettin' easy to practice after five days, when in come Judge Herrick's wife after some curt'in calico. I had a handsome piece, all done off with roses and things, but there was a fault in the weavin',—every now and then a thin streak. She didn't notice it, but she was pleased with the figures on't, and said she'd take the whole piece. Well, just as I was wrappin' of it up, what Mr. Parkes here said about tryin' to act jest as the Lord would in our place come acrost me. Why, I turned as red as a beet, I know I did. It made me all of a tremble. There was I, a doorkeeper in the tents of my God, as David says, really cheatin' and cheatin' a woman. I tell ye, brethren, I was all of a sweat. 'Mis' Herrick,' says I, 'I don't b'lieve you've looked real close at this goods; 'taint thorough wove,' says I. So she didn't take it;

but what fetched me was to think how many times I'd done such mean, onreliable little things to turn a penny, and all the time sayin' and prayin' that I wanted to be like Christ. I kep' a-trippin' of myself up all day jest in the ordinary business, and I was a peg lower down when night come than I was a Thursday. I'd ruther, as far as the hard work is concerned, lay a mile of four-foot stone wall than undertake to do a man's livin' Christian duty for twelve workin' hours; and the heft of that is, it's because I ain't used to it, and I ought to be.

"So this mornin' come around, and I felt a mite more cherk. 'Twas missionary mornin', and seemed as if 'twas a sight easier to preach than to practise. I thought I'd begin to old Mis' Vedder's. So I put a Testament in my pocket and knocked to her door. Says I, 'Good-mornin', ma-am', and then I stopped. Words seemed to hang, somehow. I didn't want to pop right out that I'd come over to try'n convert her folks. I hemmed and swallered a little, and fin'lly I said, says I, 'We don't see you to meetin' very frequent, Mis' Vedder.'

"'No, you don't!' ses she, as quick as a wink. 'I stay to home and mind my business.'

"'Well, we should like to have you come along with us and do ye good,' says I sort of conciliatin'.

"'Look a here, deacon!' she snapped; 'I've lived alongside of you fifteen year, and you knowed I never went to meetin'; we aint a pious lot, and you knowed it; we're poorer'n death and uglier'n sin. Jim he drinks and swears, and Malviny dono her letters. She knows a heap she hadn't ought to, besides. Now what are you a-comin' here to-day for, I'd like to know, and talkin' so glib about meetin'? Go to meetin'! I'll go or come jest as I darn please, for all you. Now get out o' this!' Why, she come at me with a broomstick. There wasn't no need on't; what she said was enough. I *hadn't* never asked her nor hern to so much as think of goodness before. Then I went to another place jest like that,—I won't call no more names,—and sure enough there was ten children in rags, the hull of 'em, and the man half-drunk. He giv' it to me, too; and I don't wonder. I'd never lifted a hand to serve nor save 'em before in all these years. I'd said consider-

'ble about the heathen in foreign parts, and give some little for to convert 'em, and I had looked right over the heads of them that was next door. Seemed as if I could hear Him say, 'These ought ye to have done, and not have left the other undone.' I couldn't face another soul to-day, brethren. I come home, and here I be. I've been searched through and through and found wantin'. God be merciful to me a sinner!"

He dropped into his seat, and bowed his head; and many another bent, also. It was plain that the deacon's experience was not the only one among the brethren. Mr. Payson rose, and prayed as he had never prayed before; the week of practise had fired his heart, too. And it began a memorable year for the church in Sugar Hollow; not a year of excitement or enthusiasm, but one when they heard their Lord saying, as to Israel of old, "Go forward;" and they obeyed his voice. The Sunday-school flourished, the church services were fully attended, every good thing was helped on its way, and peace reigned in their homes and hearts; imperfect, perhaps, as new growths are, but still an offshoot of the peace past understanding.

And another year they will keep another week of practise, by common consent.

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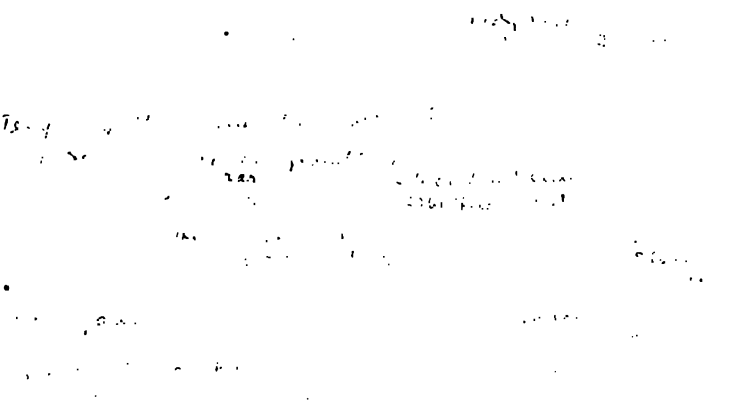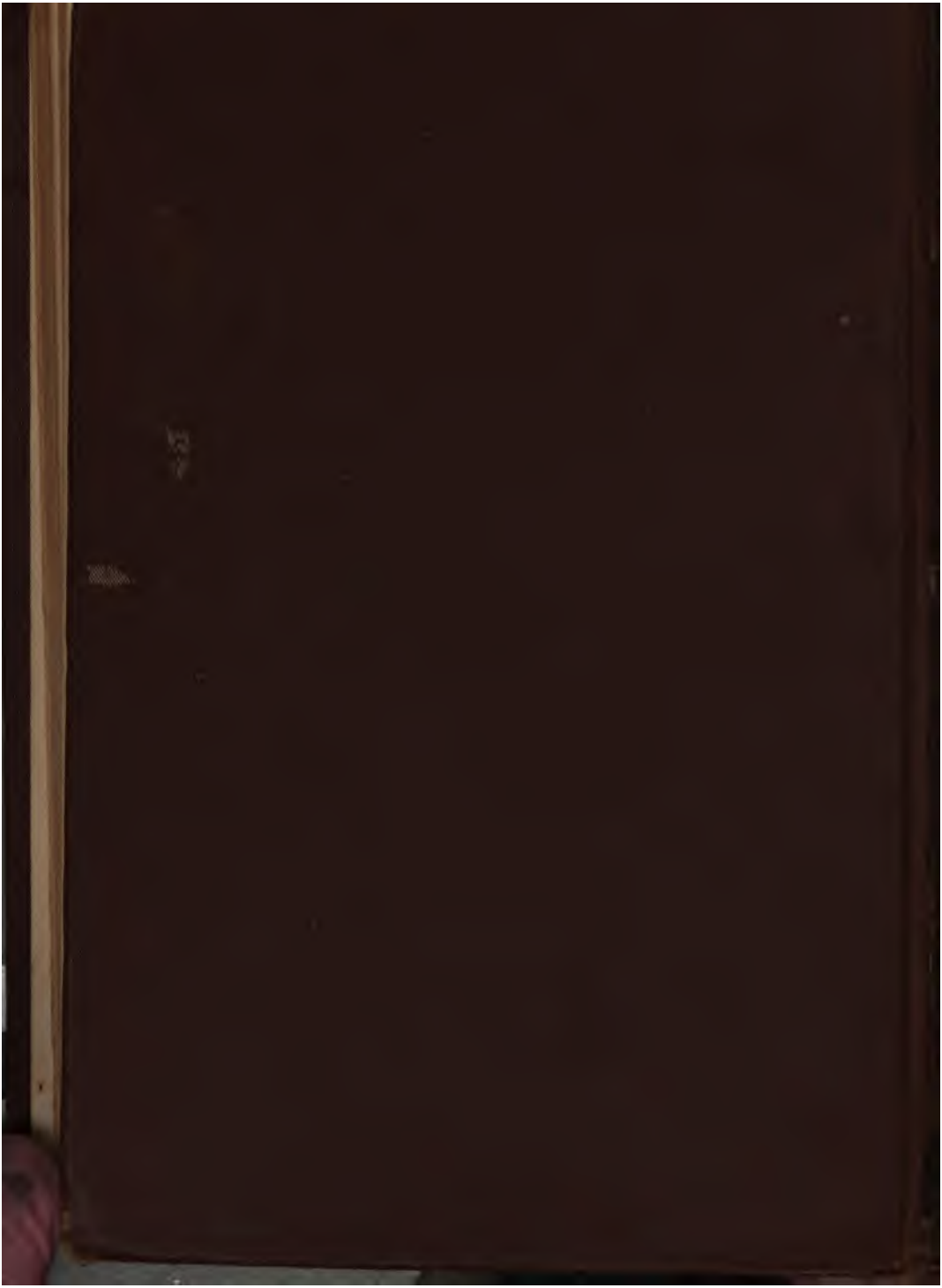
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